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MARCH 1996
FIRST PLAYSTATION GUN GAM
REVIEWED!
AMAZING SIX-PLAYER FIGHTING ACTION!
Guardian Heroes
FROM SEGA!
Virtua Fighter 2
Lethal Techniques REVEALED!
Toshinden 2: PlayStation
SF Zero: PlayStation/Saturn
Panzer Dragoon 2: Saturn
Toy Story: MegaDrive/SNES
Breath of Fire 2: SNES
Ultimate MK3: 3DO
NBA In The Zone: PlayStatio
Darius Gaiden: Saturn
Magic Carpet: Saturn
Atari Karts: Jaguar
Battle Cruiser 3000AD: PC
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MANX TT SUPERBIKE
ARCADE SPECIAL!
FIGHTING VIPERS

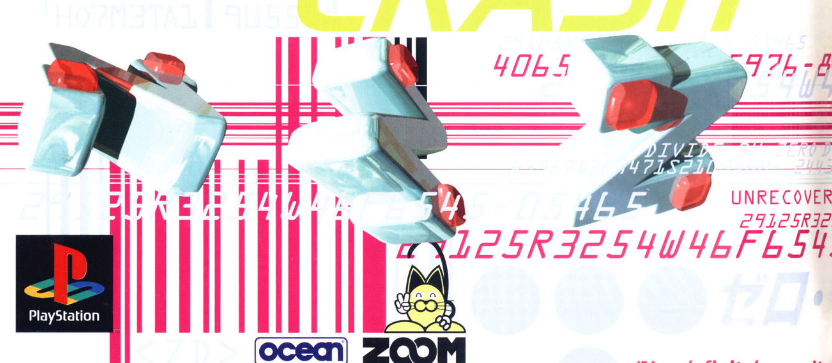
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the virtual freedom of the vast digital XTAL TOWER.

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the undiscovered depths that
Expect anything.

SYSTEM CRASH

XTA

406578U490H5976-89



"You definitely won't f
which ought to be rec





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GUARDIAN HEROES

Sega's hot new hack-n-slash RPG is EXCLUSIVELY ours for review. Why? Because you deserve the pleasure!

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FIGHTING VIPERS

Hi, I'm Candy! Want to know all about me? Turn to page 74 and find out. Fighting Vipers rule okay – aye-aye-aye-ayeeee…!!!

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ISSUE # 172
MARCH '96

REGULARS

PREVIEWS

WORK IN PROGRESS

REVIEWS

64-BIT SPECIAL!!

32-BIT

16-BIT

EDITORIAL

BLAME US...

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DOLBY FOR THE AMAZING NEW SOUND SYSTEM!!!
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FACING EACH OTHER BACK TO BACK

If there's one thing going to force a global standard for video games, it's network gaming.

However hard individual companies try to impose their system as 'The Standard', this isn't going to happen so long as their hardware is not compatible with somebody else's. For as long as hardware manufactures are banging their heads together, this whole exciting scene just isn't going to take off in the way it deserves. So it's interesting to see how many of the companies you'd previously associate with consoles are producing high-class versions of their titles for PC: Capcom, Sega, Namco, Taito, all these people have been fostering PC projects for some time. *X-Men*, for example, is rumoured to be arcade perfect on PC, as is *Ridge Racer*. Plus the latest version of *Panzer Dragoon*, admittedly using the Diamond Edge board, is nigh-on identical to the Saturn original. What's more there's serious talk of porting *Sega Rally* onto PC as well! This month Virgin have released a Network compatible edition of *Super Street Fighter II*. *Doom* nuts are already comfortable with the idea of challenging strangers, some hundreds of miles away, to a Death Match. Imagine the situation when many more games can be played this way. Makes sitting in your bedroom competing against the same bunch of mates seem stale doesn't it.





Meanwhile we're in the uneasy situation of judging which machine is doing what the best, and with whose games. Of course the only place you get to appreciate the bigger picture is right here in CVG. Trust us for our unbiased opinion on one of the most exciting forms of entertainment around.

PAUL

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED THIS CHRISTMAS?

You may not believe this, but sales figures for computer games in the weeks that lead up to Christmas account for a major chunk of the entire year's sales for most software companies. This Christmas boom invariably provides the ideal opportunity for software companies to boast about their special relationship with Santa and his little helpers. But with so much riding on a successful Christmas, are these stories the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth... or are they merely circumstantial evidence?

We kitted out super-sleuth Kate Russell with a magnifying glass and a deer stalker to get the real facts behind the seasonal successes...

...and the Christmas turkeys.

ARE YOU TAKING THE RISE OUT OF ME?

One of the biggest surprises during our investigation was the number of copies of Rise of the Robots that found their way to the check-outs. Apparently it still sold by the bucket load this Christmas. Why? One reason, pure and simple – the rock-bottom sale price of £9.99. Which proves that many people still find the average price of a computer game totally unacceptable and will go for the cheapo every time, given half a chance. Well, maybe it's marginally better to get a copy of Rise of the Robots in your stocking than 3 pairs of flannel Y-fronts. Or is it?

LIFE IN THE OLD DOG YET

A heartening piece of news for Amiga supporters emerged during this post -Christmas High Street stomp. It would seem that contrary to informed opinion this troubled format is not quite so much of a stuffed dodo as some would have you believe. Alright, so nobody in their right mind is likely to rush out and buy a new Amiga, but that doesn't stop it having a faithful following of many thousand happy owners (we assume they're happy, maybe they just can't afford a new machine) and so it's apparently still going strong. In most of the shops a lot of games for the Amiga were bought... the most popular ones being *Formula 1*, *King Pin* and *Worms*.

Maybe some of the traditional Amiga developers who jumped ship to the PC and consoles last year, jumped a shade too soon?



CHRISTMAS CRACKER

Official software sales figures often include distribution sales of games that then sit gathering dust until they find their way into the bargain bucket, and often depend on what promotions the big stores happen to be pushing at a given time. This is also known as the "you can sell anything to anybody if you make the display stand big enough" syndrome. With this in mind we asked a cross-section of punters what they really bought. The top five names that came up time and time again, to make this thoroughly unofficial chart were:



1. **Tekken** on the PlayStation
2. **Rebel Assault II & Worms** on the PC
3. **Doom & Worms** on the PlayStation
4. **Champ Manager 2** on the PC
5. **Indiana Jones & Monkey Island** on the PC



So there you have it. But the 'War' is far from over. Our contacts at retail are not placing too much importance on what happened this past season. They know the real battle is due to take place... around about now as a matter of fact. Apparently it is believed that many potential buyers sat on the fence this Christmas to see which system emerged with the best games, and the most promise for the future. Sony continue to impress PlayStation devotees with an astounding amount of support from first-class, third-party licensees. Meanwhile Sega are claiming that Saturn is now outselling PlayStation by a ratio of 6:1 in Japan. Could the same happen here? Can Ultra 64 get the stranglehold on the market Nintendo claim it will? Will everybody succumb to the lure M2, and the Global Standard they suggest? Or is the PC – with the aid of Windows '95 – already the only sensible option? Time, as always, will tell...

WAR OF THE SUPER CONSOLES

Despite the endless war of words and marketing hype surrounding the battle between the Saturn and PlayStation, it would appear that Joe Public has voted almost unanimously. Unsurprisingly it's the new kid on the block, Sony, who is winning the day. In every shop we visited the story was the same... PlayStations are practically marching out of the shops by themselves. In some cases there have even been fights breaking out over the last boxes left!

Most shoppers quizzed said it was the huge amount of games available that swayed them in favour of Sony's console, although one did say that the colour scheme of the PlayStation went better with his bedroom's decor. Tsch.





PETREA DOYLE



It was all that Trea could stand. The rest of the team's scant disregard for deadlines. Continuous childish banter. Zits. Dandruff. Megadeth CDs. Jaime's hair. Tom's socks. Paul. Cox's eternal Macintosh babble. SO. She's left. Gone. Sort of. Actually she still sits in exactly the same chair, and puts up with the same old rubbish, but she's promoted to marketing guru now. So soon you'll be buying CVG without giving it a second thought. It'll be as natural as breathing.

Playlist: Sega Rally, Daytona USA, Ridge Racer (Trea had her car nicked this month!)

CG STAFF T-9

PAUL DAVIES



One look at Paul's dishevelled state would tell you he's been under pressure this month. Not through work, you understand, just by the sheer number of games available to him. Japan introduced the dubious pleasures of simulation games, not forgetting Dragon Quest VI – the big Christmas sell-out. And the arrival of Street Fighter Zero in the office has ensured that the Games Room, newly kitted out with Dolby Surround Sound, has made the production of this latest issue a downright miracle to perform! Fresh eyeballs and ear-drums for this boy, please.

Playlist: Guardian Heroes, SF Zero, DKC2, VF2, Fighting Vipers, Dragon Quest VI

TOM GUISE



He's a bright one, that Mr Tom – as you can tell from the amazing Guardian Heroes review featured this issue. All his own work, every word. Apart from the words that aren't (Paul and Ed). Bright, but not so bright and early as the rest of the team would have liked. As punishment for his lack of punctuality, we made him listen to Atari Karts at full volume in the Games Room. When he escaped, he was made to go to the shop for loads of scoff, which, as a matter of course, he was in no fit state to eat. Ha-hargh!

Playlist: Guardian Heroes, Return Fire: Maps O' Death, VF2, PS Doom, Manx TT

ED LOMAS



The effervescing Lomas has outdone himself once more with a load of hot new information for his VF2 guide. He's also the fool responsible for these ridiculous VF2 charactatures of the CVG team. Proud that he is of these 'creative portraits', Ed is giving you, yes YOU, the opportunity to feature in this yer magazine as the video game character of your choi... er. Yes you're right – it is a poor idea. But he'll do it anyway. He'll even make you into Thomas the Tank Engine if you so wish. Strewth.

Playlist: VF2, Fighting Vipers, Return Fire, SF Zero, Manx TT, Guardian Heroes, Ultimate MK3

TOM COX



"You've got to cruel to be kind", advises Captain Cox. And so demonstrates by persecuting simpering Deputy Tom Guise for being late – for everything. Even going so far as to reprimand the lad, through 1 000 000 dbs of PA at a recent Slow Boat to Barnett gig (Cox plays bass in SBTB). While he's dreaming of new ways to punish Mr Tom, he soothes his tattered nerves with a game of Road Rash on3DO – in full 360° Dolby blast-o-mode.

Playlist: Road Rash, Mario Kart

JAIME SMITH



You could almost hear the hearts popping above Jaime's head, as he floated into the games room to play Street Fighter Zero this month. For Jaime this is the only game to arrive this year, as he has been drooling over the coin-op since its arrival in his home town. We used to like Jaime, pleasant feller that he is. But Zero has revealed another side to his character: A foul, relentless braggart with stories about playing SFII with his elbow. OH SHAT AAP!

Playlist: Street Fighter Zero, VF2, Loaded, Street Fighter Zero (with his elbow)

connected

the wired-up gaming news section

The war of the super consoles is set to get even hotter, as the main challengers unveil their plans for the year ahead. *Tekken 2* is unveiled on PlayStation and Sega announce their hot coin-op conversions. But most incredible of all are Matsushita's plans for M2...

M2 SET TO RIDE THE DIGITAL VIDEO WAVE

Following the sale of the 64-bit 3DO M2 technology to Matsushita for $100 million, comes news of the Japanese electronics giant's plans to turn M2 into a viable global standard – through digital video disc players.
As reported in the industry paper (CTW 15th Jan), DVD is being backed as the upcoming successor to VHS by some of the leading names in electronics. Matsushita, Philips, Toshiba, Hitachi, Mitsubishi, Pioneer, Time Warner, Victor, Thomson and even Sony all support the new technology. And Matsushita (owners of Panasonic and Technics), one of DVD's heaviest backers, intends on using DVD to bring M2 into the home. The first DVD players are set for release in Japan around autumn of this year, with US and UK machines following. M2 machines are set for release at about the same time. However, by the end of the year Matsushita intend on releasing DVD/ M2 machines, possibly at the same price as a normal DVD! Thus if digital video disc takes off, M2 would gain an immediate user base, paving the way for 3DO's global standard multi-media games machine. This would cause problems for Sony and Philips, and rumour has it they may release DVD machines with their own hardware (PlayStation and CD-i), built in. The other element to consider is Sega who, it's rumoured, intend on backing M2. However, after a leading Japanese newspaper claimed the deal was almost set, Sega claimed it was nonsense. Whatever the case, it seems M2 may be in a more powerful position than anyone could have imagined.



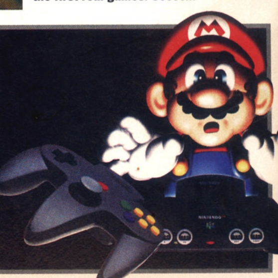


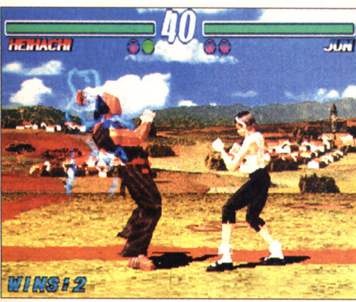
▲ *It's those same M2 pictures again, wot we prints every munf. But soon we'll see the first real games. Sooooon.*

NINTENDO DO THE HOKEY-KOKEY



Will they or won't they – release the Ultra 64 in Europe this Spring? Well, Nintendo had better make a decision soon because time is running out fast! Here's the story as it stands. See who you believe: Hiroshi Yamauchi, President of Nintendo Co Ltd, says Europe isn't going to see NU64 until 1997 at the earliest. However, Chairman of NOA, Howard Lincoln, is adamant that the US and Europe WILL have the system by the end of April 1996. We hate to say it, but the Japanese official line is seldom proved wrong. As for the absence of NU64 news stories, nobody is allowed to say anything until March. Though we are chasing everybody we can.





▲ Notice the green 'rounds won' indicator, as in Tekken 2 Ver B (normal Tekken 2 has red indicators). So Ver B features seem like a dead cert.



▲ Team Battle Mode, just like VF2. And look, there are 23 character boxes! Nuff said.

TEKKEN 2

– FIRST PLAYSTATION PICTURES!

Ever since *Tekken 2* was released in the arcades, PlayStation owners have been waiting for the first pictures of their answer to *Virtua Fighter 2* – and here they are! What's more, these actual shots of the PlayStation version of *Tekken 2* should whet your appetities for what look set to be an incredible arcade conversion.

All the detail from the Super 11 coin-op looks to have made it onto the PlayStation. The high screen resolution, the excellent light sourcing on the characters and the brilliant backdrops, it all looks spot-on!. What's more, it's surely set to run at 60 frames an second (the same as *VF2*), as even the first game achieved that. Of course, the big question is whether all the game's moves (which supposedly amount to not much less than *VF2's*) have been crammed into the game. This shouldn't prove to be a problem though, as word has it that the PlayStation is getting the new Version B model of the game. This 'tweaked' update has better balanced character strengths and the ironing out of some lesser game bugs.

The biggest feature of Version B is the time delay switch, which steadily introduces new playable characters into the game over a series of months. PS *Tekken 2* however, is likely to follow the formula of the first game, giving you the playable boss characters, when each respective regular character has beaten their boss. That amounts to over 20 fighters!

The release date for the game is set for March in Japan and, whilst the game doesn't have quite the fanatical following of *VF2* over there, is nonetheless the biggest PlayStation release since the first game. Definitely expect more next month.



▲ The backdrops look totally stunning, but as with the first game, they're only 2D.

ULTIMATE *HERETIC* IS COMING!

At long last, a complete version of Raven Software's sword-and-sorcery *Doom* spin-off, *Heretic*, is set to hit the shops. Created using id's actual *Doom* game engine, *Heretic* puts you in the pointy shoes of a wizard (as opposed to *Doom's* gun-toting space marine) armed with wands, crossbows, bolt-firing claws and the Phoenix Rod (ancient BFG equivalent), as you wander dungeons filled with flying gargoyles, were-beasts, flying mages (who quite scarily speak backwards) and the evil archmage, D'Sparil! The original three-episode version of the game was never released into the shops, being available only from id themsleves. However, the huge success of *Hexen*, has caused an upsurge of interest in its prequel, so id and Raven have decided to release the game commercially, complete with two brand-new expert episodes – The Ossuary and Stagnant Demense. This bristling 45-level version, entitled *Heretic: Shadow Of The Serpent Rider* is set for release in March, priced £39.99.



▲ **The first level the new Ossuary episode. And already you face boss characters like... the Maulotaur!**

THE WINDOWS OF DOOM!

Adding to the ever growing legion that is *Doom*, id's classic maze game has returned to its original hunting ground – the PC, this time with an all-new Windows 95 version of the game. So what makes this version so special? Well for a start, it's *Ultimate Doom*, meaning it has 'tweaked' layouts of the original levels, plus the newer *'Thy Flesh Consumed'* chapter (that's 36 levels in all). But that's not what makes it special. Supposedly it also has an even higher screen resolution. Not that we can tell. It does however, run a bit slower. But what makes this Windows 95 *Doom* so special is its incredible 16-PLAYER link-up possibilities – original *Doom* can only handle four player link-ups. Of course, you're unlikely to get 16 PCs in one room (unless you work for NASA or something), so this feature is designed to make use of DWANGO (Dial-up Wide-Area Network Gaming Operation). Running 24-hours-a-day, this website caters for network Doomers hungry for a challenge. Just log-on, offer a challenge and other people can join in. A 16-player gorefest sounds totally brilliant to us and if you're interested, the game is already out.



▲ **Winodows Doom looks just like old version, but runs a tad slower.**

LATEST COIN-OPS CONFIRMED FOR SEGA SATURN



The time between games hitting the arcades and reaching consoles seems to get shorter every month, as Sega confirm two of their hottest coin-ops for the Saturn – before they even hit the streets! *Virtual On* and *Fighting Vipers* are DEFINITELY coming to the Saturn this year, together with at least three other unrevealed Sega coin-ops.

Virtual On (seen in CVG 169) puts two players in robot battlesuits (not literally) and pits them against each other in a range of massive 3D arenas. It's similar to Namco's *Cyber Sled* – especially with regard to the two-joystick control – only you have far more freedom to run, jump and even engage in close-quarter combat. The superb 3D graphics are powered by the Model 2 board. However, after the incredible results of Sega's recent Saturn conversions, we can expect a near spot-on conversion.

A harder game to convert is the newer Model 2B *Fighting Vipers*. The latest fighting game from AM2, *FV* features some incredible background effects and walled surroundings, as well as some stunning graphical touches such as extended fighter shadows. Tough work for the Saturn to reproduce. However, it's almost certain that AM2 will be handling the conversion themselves and they claim their mind-boggling Saturn translation of *VF2* only utilises 66% percent of the machine's capabilities (*VF1* only used 30% of the machine's power), so there's scope for improvement. Besides, as AM2 have said before about their other conversions, they wouldn't even be attempting the task unless they could produce a satisfactory result. If you want to see for yourself why the game is so amazing, just take a look at our four-page *Fighting Vipers* Videodrome on page 74.

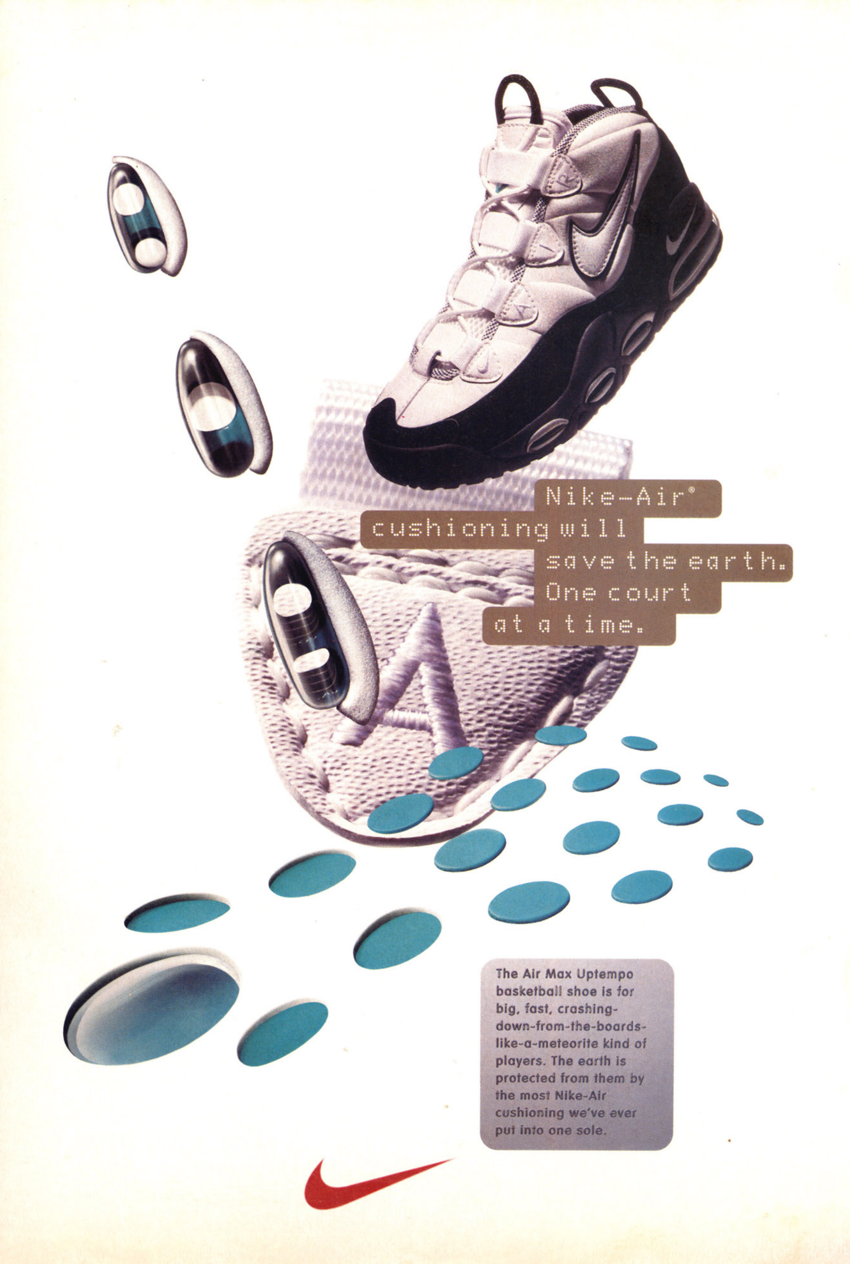
As yet, it's unclear whether development has begun on either of the projects, but we can expect to see the results by Christmas. In the meantime, the arcade versions should be appearing in your arcades about now!

VIRTUAL ON

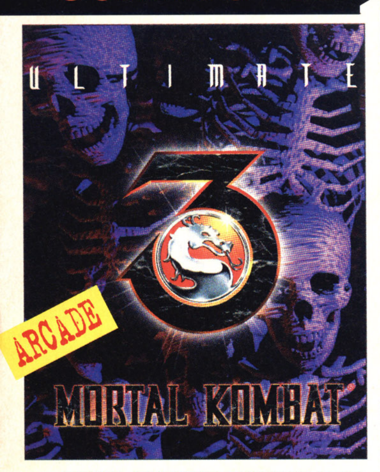
▲ **Virtual On should use the now-complete Saturn link-up cable.**



▲ **With FV complete, AM2 can concentrate on their next coin-op. Not Daytona 2, but a driving game based on European super cars.**



Nike-Air®
cushioning will
save the earth.
One court
at a time.
The Air Max Uptempo basketball shoe is for big, fast, crashing-down-from-the-boards-like-a-meteorite kind of players. The earth is protected from them by the most Nike-Air cushioning we've ever put into one sole.



ULTIMATE MK3 ON 3DO

We've been trying to get this one in for review all month, but 3DO couldn't get us a finished copy in time, so instead it's in our news. Nonetheless though, the news that 3DO is getting *Ultimate MK3* is pretty hot stuff. Still fairly new in the arcades, this update of the hugely popular third instalment of the *Mortal Kombat* series is packed with all manner of new features. Extra moves for the all the characters, four new regular characters (Jade, Kitana, Reptile and Scorpion), three Ultimate Kombat Kode characters (Ermac, classic Sub Zero and Mileena) and three more hidden characters (Noob Saibot, *MK2* Smoke and Rain). Plus, there's new hidden backgrounds, multiple endings, all-new finishing moves and an eight-player tournament batle option. And 3DO owners are getting all these *Ultimate* extras! The game is set for release in April, at about the same time as Saturn *Ultimate MK3*. Expect a full review next month, complete with a competition to win some copies of the game AND A 3DO!

And just to answer the question of the month – there are currently NO plans to release *Ultimate MK3* on PlayStation. Nor are there any plans to release a memory card with the extra features on. That would be impossible, fools.

RAZOR RAMON HITS THE PC!

And so does Bam Bam Bigelow, The Undertaker and Doink The Clown, to name just four of the eight WWF stars in the *Wrestlemania Arcade Game*. The PlayStation conversion of this Midway coin-op (made by the team that created *NBA Jam*) proved to be a totally excellent wrestling experience (scoring 93% in CVG 168), far surpassing previous 16-bit WWF outings. And this PC version should prove the same if past conversions of Midway's *Mortal Kombat* games are anything to go by.

Joining the above mentioned wrestlers, are giant sumo Yokozuna,Shawn Michaels, Brett Hart and Lex Luger, together with real commentary from actual WWF hosts Vince MacMahon and Jerry Lawler. What's more, as with the *Mortal Kombat* games, all the wrestlers were actually studio-filmed performing their moves, with special effects added to spice up the action. Plus you can perform all the usual combos , ranging from the easy to the expert-player 30 hit attacks. The game even has fatalities! Expect a full review next month.

TWO MORE ULTIMATE KOMBAT KODES REVEALED!

Ermac's one of them, and here are the other two Kombat Kodes to access Mileena and Classic Sub-Zero in his *Mortal Kombat 2* outfit!

For MILEENA - 22264 22264
For CLASSIC SUB-ZERO - 81835 81835

We've already printed a load of moves for these two, as well as for all the other characters, but here are the newer discoveries. If you've been reading the last few issues you'll almost have a complete set by now! Rest assured that we'll be printing them all in full when the home versions become available.

MILEENA
Animality - (Close) F, D, D, F, HK
Babality - D, D, F, F, HP
Friendship - D, D, B, F, HP

CLASSIC SUB-ZERO
Fatality - (Close) D, D, D, F, HP
Pit Fatality - F, D, F, F, HP

JADE
Babality - D, D, F, D, HK

SHANG TSUNG
Classic Sub-Zero morph - BK, BK, R, R
Mileena - R, BK, HK

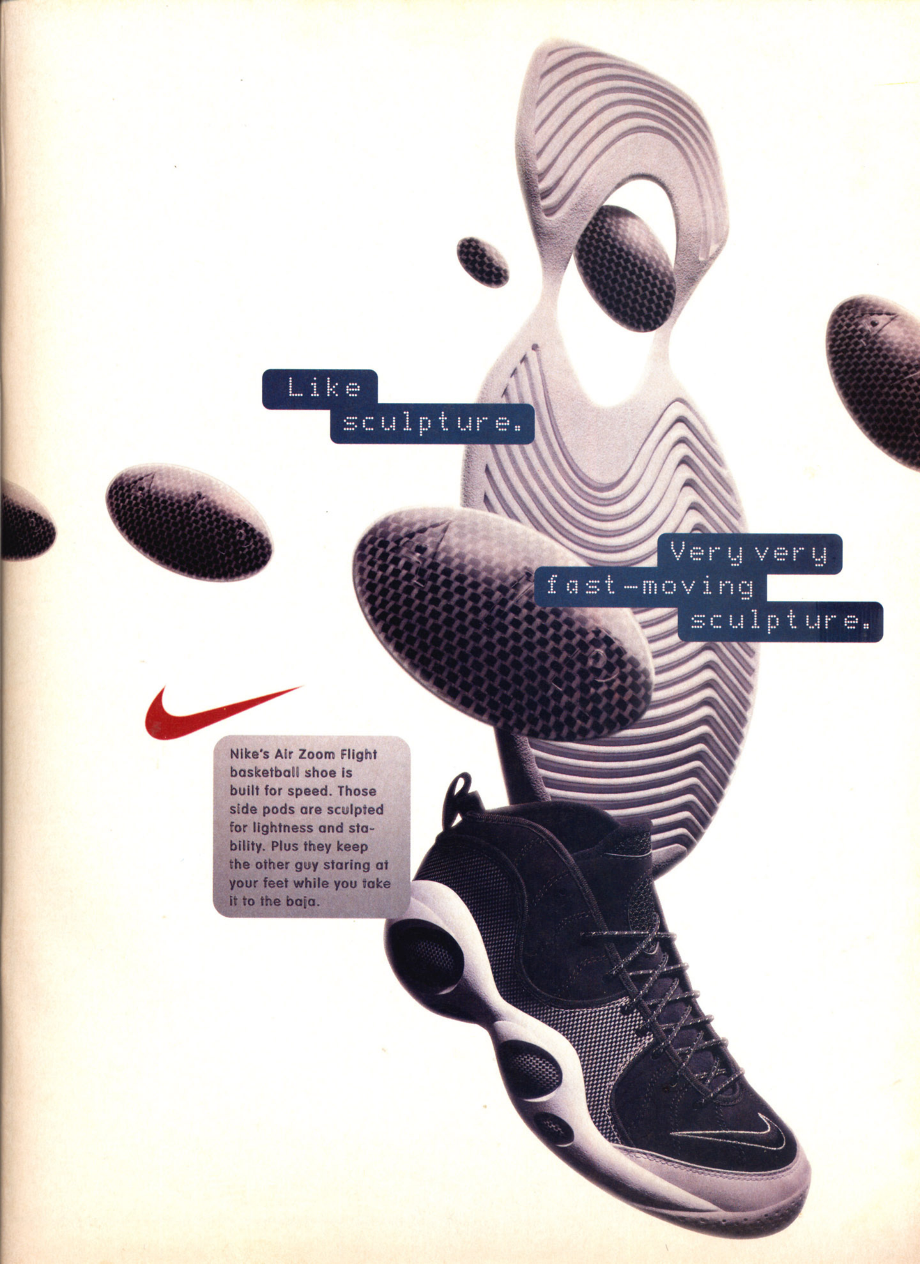
We also understand that some arcades have got their machines set up so that Classic Smoke, Noob Saibot and Rain are all playable, but as yet we don't know how to get them properly. There's also a space on the character select screen for one more character...

DOUBLE KEIO

The Mega-CD had few memorable shoot 'em ups. One in particular though, JVC's *Keio Flying Squadron*, stood out as stylish, original, excellent fun and extremely challenging. News of a sequel in the works was announced over a year ago, but only now have first shots been released. Once again putting you in control of the raccoon-hunting, dragon-flying, bunny-girl, *Keio 2* looks just as weird as the first one, only more stunning, with some fantastical backdrops. As usual, we'll keep you informed on this one.



▲ *Where's her fire-breathing dragon then? EH?*


Like
sculpture.
Very very
fast-moving
sculpture.
Nike's Air Zoom Flight basketball shoe is built for speed. Those side pods are sculpted for lightness and stability. Plus they keep the other guy staring at your feet while you take it to the baja.

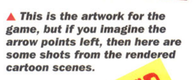
connected

A NORMAL GAME!

That's what you'd think a game called *Normality* would be, but Gremlin Interactive, the creators of this point-and-click 3D adventure for the PC CD-ROM, claim it's anything but that. Inspired by the film 1984, the game is set in the future city of Neutropolis, where the spookily-named 'mood magnets' keep the citizens' suppressed. Enter Kent, a rocker type character with a little too much individuality, who intends to face the NormPolice and 'rejuvenate' the city. Featuring some mightily impressive 3D graphics – allowing you to fully move around your environment and examine objects – cut together with some impressive rendered cartoon scenes, the game is packed with plenty of Waynes World-style speech. It all looks highly impressive, providing the humour is to your taste, and we'll be reviewing it next month in time for its March release.







▲ This is the artwork for the game, but if you imagine the arrow points left, then here are some shots from the rendered cartoon scenes.

IMPORT ONSLAUGHT

PlayStation

BIG BROTHER

▲ Anyone got a big brother who looks like this? If you have, don't contact us.



Just as this issue went to press, a few import PlayStation games arrived in the office. None of them are outstanding enough to merit crucial reviewing (which is just as well, since we didn't have any room left), so expect us to cover them next month. In the meantime, here's a rundown of the titles.

Floating Runner is a 3D cutesy-platformer which we covered in our news section last month, describing it as similar to *Jumping Flash*. And indeed it is. You have to guide a little brown-haired human character around a 3D terrain smattered with rivers, trees, hills and fences, jumping on baddies' heads and opening chests. Just like any platformer really, except in 3D. From first impressions, it seems... okay.

Robopit is another 3D cutesy-character game, only in this one you have to battle against an opponent in a large arena – *Cyber Sled*-style. It actually seems quite boring, to be honest. This one's also coming to the Saturn by the way.

Finally, we've got a interesting horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em up modestly entitled *Choaniki-Kyukyokumutekigingasaikyootoko*. Just to translate, this stands for *Super Big Brother – The Ultimate Invincible Galaxy Strongman*. Which makes sense, since it features a man who's nearly as big as the screen, dressed in nothing more than a pair of underdaks and a helmet. It's the only thing that makes sense, mind you, since the rest of the game has blokes in their pants, performing human pyramids and a bald bloke with a robotic, erm, appendage. And those are the bosses! Very silly indeed.


NIKE
We can cushion you
from everything
except
lethargy.
aimax
If you have the energy to bike, step, lift, serve and run (to the sports store), Nike has the shoe to do it all in: the Air Trainer Max, the most cushioned cross-training shoe we've ever made.



Yes, *Killer Instinct* part two it is better than the first game. Much better. Everyone is used to the flash graphical style of the original *KI*, and what we all needed this time around was fluid combo-exchanges, as opposed to the stop-and-go nature of the original. First of all we need to clear the confusing issue of *KI* on Ultra 64. That game is going to be an all new variation on the theme. *KI2* is strictly for the arcade, and belongs to Midway as much as it does Nintendo. Here's what those Rare boys have worked into the system this time around:

FEATURES:

All fighters have a Power Up Bar, said to award the aggressive player with special moves'. Combo Breakers now include moves where fighters grab an opponent, then counter. Quick thinking players are also able to work 'throws' into combos for extended juggling possibilities. The backgrounds are also described as being Interactive – but falling down pits, and so on doesn't occur until the end of a fight. The likes of exploding barrels has all been seen before in Street Fighter II, of course, only this time the shrapnel causes damage to any fool standing close by. Hmm, not sure about that idea. All-new fatalities we have worked out of the machine so far include TJ Combo's Machine Gun attack, and one of the new characters (we thinK it was Maya) summons acid rain. They're pretty horrible, but here's the best bit – victims can escape their gruesome fate!
It's the ATEI show soon, where we're sure to discover many secrets the Rare/ Midway faction aren't letting go of yet!
Read all about it next month, in Videodrome.

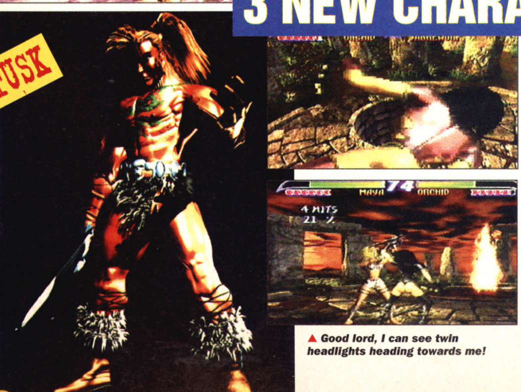




▲ *Eyaaa its gone all orange!*







▲ *Good lord, I can see twin headlights heading towards me!*

LAST MINUTE CHEATS FOR FIFA '96 ON PLAYSTATION

Pause, go to Options, press buttons, exit game, go to Main Menu, choose Options to see these cheats from Maximum and Billy Mager.

Formal (players in tuxedos)	STXSTTXT
Federation (Data and Spock)	STXSTTXX
Dynamic Duo (Batman + Robin)	STXSTTTS
Default Colour Palette	STXSTTTX
Invisible Players	STXSTTXS
Oktoberfest	STXSTTTT
Dream Team	SSTTXXSS
EA Custom Teams	STXSTTSS



▲ *Oh, the little man seems to have been deactivated.*



▲ *Golfer crushed by inflatable rubber ring shocker!*

ACTUA UPDATE

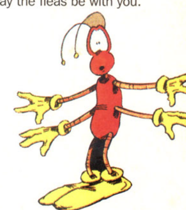
Though *Actua Golf* on the PlayStation was featured back in the September 1995 issue of CVG, there have been quite a few big enhancements since then, and there are more to come before its April release. The game is the second in Gremlin's *Actua Sports* range – the first being *Actua Soccer* – and it promises to be just as successful as that. Everything has been created in 3D to give a more realistic feel than some of the photograph-based golf games available, as it can be viewed from almost any angle. There are ten possible replay angles, including reverse views, free cameras and loads of split-screen views, allowing you to see what happened from three angles at once. There are fly-bys before each hole, showing you all of the hazards, and there's also the ability to walk around the hole, examining everything yourself.

The sound consists mainly of the usual tweeting birds and thwacking noises, but it's the speech where the game really stands out. The commentator gives an in-depth analysis of the course at the beginning as well as commenting on every shot. In fact, he even takes the mickey out of you if you take too long with a shot! Unfortunately, the current commentator won't be in the finished version – but don't panic, Gremlin have got Peter Allis (famous golfing TV presenter) to do the final commentary! Hurrah!

The ball movement is looking very realistic already, and the instant playability makes it easy to get into it – *Actual Golf* may go to make up for the disappointing "next-gen" golf games we've seen so far (like Core's *Virtual Golf*, reviewed in this issue). As soon as the commentary and other features are complete, we'll be getting a copy for review. So, see you for the review next month then!

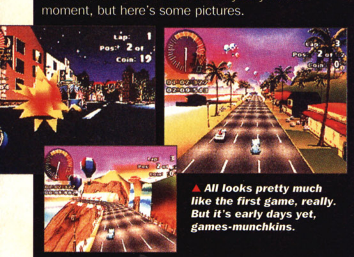
FRANTIC FLEA COMPETITION – THE INCREDIBLE RESULTS!

Yes indeed. After last month's fantabulous *Frantic Flea* competition, the entries came crawling in. And the winner is... Mr G Sharp of Banff in Scotland, who correctly answered the question 'Where are you most likely to find fleas?' The answer, naturally, is... Ed Lomas' stomach, because as we all know, Ed is just a flimsy pupation sac for Barabos the Flea-Lord. A Super NES and copy of *Frantic Flea* are on their way to you, Mr G Sharp, you lucky man. May the fleas be with you.



MOTOR TOON 2!

When the PlayStation was originally released in Japan in 1994, one of the most-awaited games for it was Sony's first in-house production, the excellent-looking 3D racer, *Motor Toon GP*. The end result wasn't quite as good as was expected, but it was entertaining nonetheless. Surprisingly though, Sony never released the game over here. Never mind though, because the sequel's in production and hopefully it'll be brilliant! The excellent cartoon-style of the original has been retained, with chugging cartoon cars and wacky landscapes in appearance. And no doubt all the silly features, such as turning into a hyper-fast cartoon character, will be in there. New features remain a bit of a mystery at the moment, but here's some pictures.



▲ ***All looks pretty much like the first game, really. But it's early days yet, games-munchkins.***

GALAXIAN 3

One of the largest arcade games of all, Namco's Galaxian 3: Project Dragoon, is coming to PlayStation and here are the first pictures. Galaxian 3 was particularly popular in the arcades due to the massive movie-theatre screen and six-player seating. Whether its linear shooting action stands up to the conversion process, with a smaller screen (even if you have a 40" TV), or whether it has 6-player multi-tap link-up, remains to be seen. Set for an early March release in Japan, we'll take another look at this one next month.



SNATCHER 2 ARRIVES!

One of the best games on the Mega-CD had to be Konami's *Snatcher*. A Manga-style interactive cartoon adventure that really succeeded thanks to its gripping, hilarious plot and clever illusion of freedom. The sequel, *Policenauts*, has been in production for a number of years now, and has been mentioned in these pages before. But now it has finally been released in Japan on PlayStation. This causes us some problem, since all the speech and text is in Japanese, making it impossible to play. A shame because it looks even better than the first game, with some excellent cartoon sections and brilliant scenes. And, as with *Snatcher*, there are shoot-outs that make use of the PlayStation light gun (*Snatcher* used the Lethal Enforcer's *Justifier*). Best of all though, there's plenty of attractive girls in the game for your slimy private detective hero to try (and fail) to chat up – one of the comedy highlights of *Snatcher*. The good news is that Sega Europe have been talking to Konami about releasing an English translated version of the game on the Saturn, which would mean we'd probably see an English PlayStation version too. The translation process though would take a long time, so don't expect it in the near future.

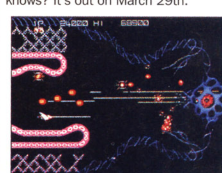


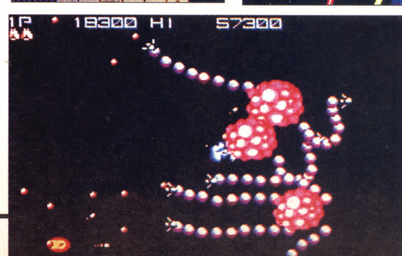
Meanwhile, the original *Snatcher* has just been released on Saturn and PlayStation in Japan. And with the lengthy text and speech translation process already done for that game (on Mega-CD) we could see that game over here very shortly...

MAKING THE GRADIUS!

There's a bit of a classic shoot 'em up revival going on at the moment, what with Saturn *Darius* getting a review this month and *In The Hunt* appearing on PlayStation and Saturn recently. Now one of the most famous horizontal blasters of all, Konami's *Gradius* is coming to Sega and Sony's machines. *Gradius Deluxe Pack* is another of Konami's classic compilation CDs and should contain all three *Gradius* games (known as *Nemesis* over here). It also features a range of viewing options, giving you an narrow arcade-shaped screen, a zoomed-in arcade sceen, or a full-size screen. A classic it may be, but *Gradius DP* looks decidely dated. Still, Namco Museum was fun, so who knows? It's out on March 29th.







◀ ***Hopefully, the skilled programmers can find a way to get the PlayStation to handle these complex 'ball tentacles' without any flickering or slowdown. Quite a task, we're sure you'll agree.***



JUMPING FLASH 2!

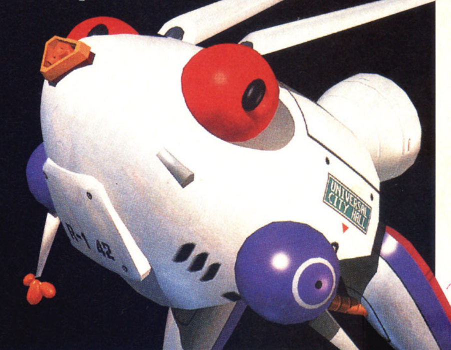
The first *Jumping Flash* on PlayStation was one of the most original games of last year, taking the platform game fully into the realms of 3D. Quite excellent it was too, except for the fact that its five levels proved too easy. Well now the robot rabbit is back, bouncing around more ingeniously-designed levels, collecting jetpods (carrots) and bashing baddies. From these early shots, the sequel doesn't look much different from the original, but hopefully it'll at least be longer with more challenge. More soon.





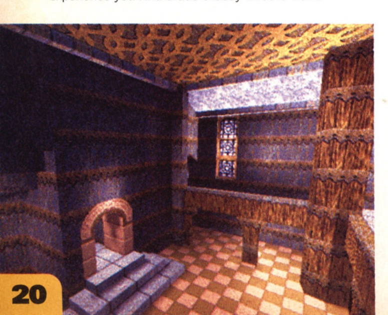
▲ Yet more stomach-churning falling scenes it seems. Those textures look a tad better, mind.

◀ And here's the sky. Reminds us of summer afternoons with glasses of cooling barley water.



QUAKE NEWS

There's still no set release date for *Quake*, but the bits and pieces of information (and rumours) are coming thick and fast now. So here's an update.
Basically, the game's similar to *Doom* (and, as it's being done by the legendary id software we can compare it to *Doom*) in that it's a 3D first person perspective game involving shooting. And that's it. After that, it's all new. For a start, it's a completely new game engine, meaning that it's now true 3D - rather than Doom's modified 2D which couldn't handle one floor on top of another. The game is based on a typical RPG scenario, featuring wizards and the like, along with their magic spells and weapons, but promises to add loads to the RPG idea. As well as interacting with the computer characters like an RPG, you can blow the clackers off them as in *Doom*. The freedom of gameplay is supposed to be fantastic. It's also being designed with the multi-player mode in mind - exchanging items, working in teams and deathmatches have already been mentioned a lot.
The game engine features "real 3D" enemies and items as opposed to the usual scaled sprites, and everything is affected by gravity and other laws of physics. For example, players and enemies react differently depending on which part of their body is hit, as with *Virtua Cop*, and they fall realistically. The game engine also features advanced light-sourcing techniques to add even more solidity to everything.
Weather features like wind and water have been talked about, the idea of experience points will probably be included; as will virtual reality headset compatibility; easy to use graphics, level and sound editors; worldwide networking compatibility; massive network possibilities... Eeeek! Eeeek! Aaaak! Aaaaak! CVG Hive-Brain going to implode!!
It may not all be definite yet, but the information makes Quake sound like the most incredible gaming experience yet! And that's exactly what id want.







21ST CENTURY PINBALL UNLIMITED

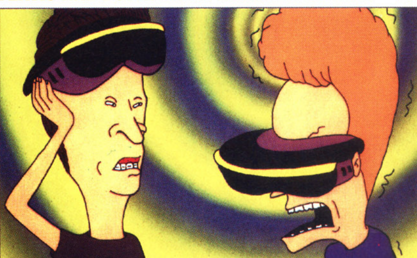
Fresh from the people who introduced *Pinball Illusions*, recently transformed into *True Pinball* for Saturn and PlayStation, is *Pinball 3D-VCR*. It's an enhanced version of Spidersoft's *Pinball Mania*, meaning that all the tables have been re-created as 3D models. Though the version shown is still pretty early, there are a number of new features to compliment the alternative perspective: There's a ten multiball option, for anyone with a PC big enough to handle it. Lesser powered machines can tailor the number to suit their needs. On top of that, a statisticzzz... screen details how many times which obstacles have been touched in a single game, or in the entire history of the table. Ever. All this, for all four tables. Aren't you the lucky ones! *Pinball 3D-VCR* is released in April.



▲ ***Remember when these things used to be made out of 'real' tables in you pub? Anyway, we're off for a food bath.***

RAAWK N' RAAAWLL!

BEAVIS AND BUTTHEAD IN VIRTUAL STUPIDITY – PC CD-ROM



◄ ***Ed Lomas and one of his mates on a Saturday afternoon. Hurhurhur.***

Though we've got a few B and B fans at CVG, we weren't expecting much of this. But it's fab! The game's a Monkey Island-style point-and-click adventure, and the aim of the game is to join Todd's gang. All of the main locations from the cartoon series are in the game, as well as the characters – who all feature their real voices from TV, supplied by his royal buttness Mike Judge. The conversations are just as funny as the TV series as they've been written by the original script writers. In fact, the whole game is so well done that it's just like taking part in one of the cartoons. The puzzles are occasionally a bit obscure, at least until you get into the swing of things and start thinking like a moron, but this doesn't ever stop you totally. There are some great mini-games – killing bugs, hitting yuppies in the nads with tennis balls, playing air guitar and loogying on people's heads – and there are some noisy raawk videos to watch including GWAR!!!
POWERCHORD RATING:
FOUR BARS OF DRONING 'A-FLAT'

QUEST FOR FAME – PC CD-ROM

We've had full-body controllers, we've had chair controllers, now PC CD-ROM game Quest for Fame comes with the Virtual Pick – a big blue plectrum which connects to your PC, enabling you to strum in time to Aerosmith!
Strumming along to music tracks might seem stupid, but the game is amazingly addictive. Start by practicing in your room before moving on to join your friend's band in his garage. If you're good enough, you can get a gig at a small club, and if that goes well – hey, it's up to you! Once you're good enough, you can fulfill every raawkers dream: playing live on stage with Aerosmith!
The Virtual Pick works really well, and the cheesy humour of the game is great. With a bunch of friends you'll have fights over who plays the next song! It's fun, it's original, it's weird – it's excellent, dude!
POWERCHORD RATING: EIGHT BARS OF NON-STOP TREMOLO-PICKED 'E' ON THE 24TH FRET

SATURN
ACTION ADVENTURE
SEGA
£TBA
OUT APRIL
1-6 PLAYER
NO OTHER VERSIONS PLANNED
NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE

GUARDIAN HEROES™

It's our cover and we've given it eight-pages! What more evidence do you need, to tell you that we've been gripped by Guardian Heroes fever!

The Saturn has the most powerful sprite-handling capabilities of any games machine currently on the market. Did you know that? Well, you'd be excused if you didn't. After all, it's not a fact that's readily demonstrated by the masses of 3D polygon games available for it. In fact, short of Capcom's *X-Men* coin-op conversion, nearly all the Saturn's 2D sprite-based games are distinctly mediocre, to say the least. And even the upcoming Saturn *Sonic* game is rumoured to be 3D. So, is there anyone out there who's two-dimensionally sighted enough to tap into all that raw sprite potential? The answer is YES! And they're called Treasure. If that name sounds familiar – and it should – it's because this Japanese programming team is responsible for some of the greatest Mega Drive titles ever made. Games such as *Gunstar Heroes* and *Dynamite Headdy*, that pushed the concept of the sprite-based game to its very limit with huge complex bosses and incredible scaling and rotational effects. Imagine what they could do with the vast capabilities of the Saturn? Well, you don't have to, because the results can be seen over the next six-pages as we review their first Saturn title – the long-awaited *Guardian Heroes!*











▲ *It's not all physical combat. You can destroy your foes with magic too!*



GUIDE YOUR WAY THROUGH AN EPIC QUEST IN – STORY MODE!

Yep, *Guardian Heroes* isn't your average mindless scrolling beat 'em up that just leads you through loosely themed themed levels filled with action. This game's got a story. What's more, you get to decide how it unfolds!

TWO GAMES IN ONE!

So what kind of game is this *Guardian Heroes*? Well, perhaps the best description would be a 'fighting adventure'. You see, rather than fitting into any rigid category of game type, *GH* is actually a combination of scrolling beat 'em up and, dare we say it, RPG. Confused? Well, all will soon become clear. Don't worry if you're not an RPG fan though, because *Guardian Heroes'* gameplay is definitely in the fighting game category.



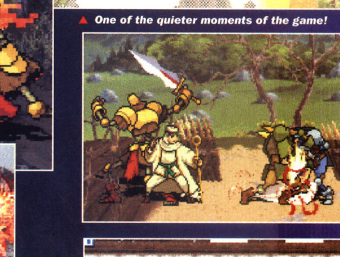
▲ The brilliant cartoon opening introduces us to the superb characters. But does it shed any light on the plot? No.





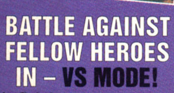






▲ One of the quieter moments of the game!







▲ The screen's looking pretty bare here.

BATTLE AGAINST FELLOW HEROES IN – VS MODE!

No fighting game would be complete without a Vs Mode. *Guardian Heroes*, however, takes the concept of multi-player combat to the extreme, as you'll find out later in this review.



▲ Not so much a one-one fighting game, as a one-on-one--on-one-on-one-on-one-on-one...



▲ Only 3 hits? You can perform upto 150 at a time if you get it right!

WHO ARE THESE GUARDIAN HEROES?

We've established that *GH* is a fighting game. So now we need some fighters. Enter the Guardian Heroes themselves. Five selectable warriors, each with their own unique talents. Understanding how to control these characters should give you a better insight into how the game is played.



HARN SAMUEL

STRENGTH: 8
VITALITY: 7
INTELLIGENCE: 3
MENTALITY: 5
AGILITY: 3
LUCK: 4

The most physical member of the team, Harn uses his massive sword to perform nearly all his devastating attacks. He is, however, quite slow... until, that is, he becomes SuperHarn!

RANDY M GREEN

STRENGTH: 3
VITALITY: 2
INTELLIGENCE: 9
MENTALITY: 9
AGILITY: 5
LUCK: 2

Although he can use his staff effectively in combat, Randy is actually a magician. He possesses a wide range of magical attacks, although to be honest they're not that powerful.





INTRODUCING... EDWARD M COGNAC

Always at Randy's side is his partner and magical accessory, a rabbit called Ed. When GUARD is held, you can control Ed to some extent. He can also be turned into a flying comet of fire!



YOU MUST LEARN *CONTROL!*



A is the block button. When held, you automatically guard from any side.



B and C are your normal and hard attack buttons respectively. By performing D-pad motions (ie. quarter circles) each character can perform a range of special attacks.

IBUCHI GINJIROU

STRENGTH: 2
VITALITY: 3
INTELLIGENCE: 5
MENTALITY: 6
AGILITY: 4
LUCK: 10

A ninja possessing some lethal high speed attacks. Flying roundhouses and rising uppercuts are his speciality. What's more, he's got some potent ninja magic at his disposal.





COMBOS!

GH allows you to string together some impressive combination attacks!

▲ Ginjirou can follow this (Down, Down-Forward, Forward + C) spinning attack...

▲ With a rising uppercut (Down, Down + C) ...

▲ ...before drop attacking (Down, Down+ C in the air).

MAGIC!

▲ Each character possesses some magic. Simply press Z and a 'think bubble' appears.

▲ You can then cycle through the different spells. Pressing Z again unleashes the attack.

▲ Advanced players can pull off each spell using D-pad motions and the Z button!

▼ GH's action isn't just a left and right affair. By pressing the L and R buttons, characters can leap three distances into the screen!

MULTI-LAYER ACTION!

NICHOLA NEIL

STRENGTH: 4
VITALITY: 4
INTELLIGENCE: 4
MENTALITY: 8
AGILITY: 6
LUCK: 4

Perhaps the game's weakest offensive character, this priestess possesses a wide range of magic, although it's mainly used for healing and shielding. She's most effective with another player at her side.

SELENA CORSAIR

STRENGTH: 5
VITALITY: 5
INTELLIGENCE: 5
MENTALITY: 5
AGILITY: 5
LUCK: 5

Appearing throughout the game to aid you, Selena only becomes selectable once you've completed the game. Fast and strong with some powerful magic, she's a formidable warrior.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE!

After many hours of play, we've so far found 29 levels in the Story Mode of *Guardian Heroes*. We say 'found' because playing *GH* isn't just a case of wading through a linear set of levels. At points throughout the game, you get to make choices about where to head to next. In trun, this dictates which level you head to and how the story unfolds. This isn't your *'Streets Of Rage 3'* occasional-multiple-routes scenario though. There's a complex path of routes through the game, meaning you have to play it through a lot of times to see every level.
As for the actual story. Well, it all looks very exciting, but we don't really know what the plot is, as we've only seen the Japanese version. Nonetheless, from what we have uncovered, here's a taster of how Story Mode unfolds.

STAGE 1



▲ The game opens as a secret meeting of the heroes tavern, is uncovered by Kingdom soldiers. The first battle begins, causing the building to catch fire and slowly collapse in flames!


▲ The fight leads out into the streets, as more soldiers try to stop the fighters from escaping the town. Their only path out is through a graveyard.


▲ Here they encounter a seemingly indestructible robot. Harn tries to defeat it using his legendary sword. However, it's wrested from him by an undead creature!



STAGE 2


▲ This undead creature turns out to be an ancient hero who joins the warriors on their quest. Not a moment too soon!


▲ Magicians appear, trapping our heroes in an enchanted cage... with a cyclops! Enemy soldiers in the cage, scream in terror!



▲ Once the cyclops is defeated, the heroes are free. Here you get your first choice of routes.

STAGE 4:


▲ The first route leads our heroes to the Magician's Guild where they uncover the wizards' secret Magic Weapon – a horde of those giant robots!

STAGE 5:


▲ Choose the second route and our heroes encounter a village of resistance fighters in a losing battling against the evil Kingdom army.

STAGE 3:


▲ The third route leads into the forest where our heroes encounter a massive plant monster.

THE GUARDIAN!


▲ You can partially control the undead hero by pressing X. This brings up a think bubble similar to the magic one.


▲ By cycling through it, you can make the guardian protect you, follow you or do nothing.


▲ Alternatively you can send him beserk unleashing an atomic blast than can destroy even the most powerful foes!

IT AIN'T NUFFINK LIKE AN RPG!

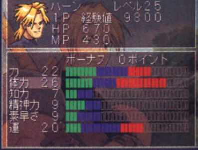
If the word RPG brings to your mind, thoughts of impossible puzzles and memorising clues in long reams of text, then don't fret, *GH* is nothing like an RPG. This game is purely a fighting affair. However, it does lift certain elements from RPGs, such as building up your character through experience.



▲ Pause the game and you see a profile of your character, complete with how much experience is needed to move them up to the next level.



▲ Each time you hit something (enemies, enemy corpses, barrels, anything) you gain experience. Level Up flashes up when you get enough.



▲ At the end of each level, you get a bar chart of your GH's abilities. For each level you've gained, you get one extra notch to add to the bar of your choice.



THE MAGIC WEAPON!



▲ Once these are destroyed, the heroes are confronted by Cannon, Head of the Guild. He unleashes his bodyguard, the android P Silver, upon them!



▲ With Silver badly damaged, Cannon flees, leaving the heroes to decide on a new destination.

FEEBLE REVOLT!



▲ With the army defeated, the heroes face a new terror. An Ancient Magic Weapon, worshipped by the villagers, has been turned against them!



▲ Defeat it and the villain behind the affair – an Ed Lomas lookalike called Zulu – makes his exit. Now it's decision time again...

THE MONSTER IN THE FOREST!



▲ Once defeated, the plant turns into a little rabbit called Midi. None other than the arch-rival of Randy's partner, Edward M Coganc!



▲ Midi though, is the least of our heroes worries as Cutty Sark, head of the Kingdom's Red Knights, appears! Overcome her and you get another set of choices...



▲ By the time you've completed three levels, your character's once puny 100 point energy has risen to around 500. They're faster and harder too!



WHERE DO YOU HEAD TO NEXT?





STAGE 12: FRONTAL BREAKOUT!

Where the Kingdom Magic Weapons have run riot in the town!





STAGE 7: COUNTRY OF PRISONERS!

A city under the cruel thumb of the dreaded Kingdom!



STAGE 11: CONFUSED DISCIPLES!

Harn's friend, Dead-Eye Gasher, has turned against his old buddy!



STAGE 10: TOWN OF TRAITORS!

Our heroes enter a city where the people seem brainwashed by the Kingdom army.

STAGE 9: MACHO AND HIS PLEASANT FRIENDS!

A band of robbers are terrorising the area from a cave hideout.



STAGE 6: KINGDOM TRAP!

A bizarre band of latex-clad bounty hunters are waiting to ambush our heroes.



STAGE 8: MISERY EARTH

Hidden in the wilds is the grave of the One-Armed Undead – owner of the second legendary sword!



FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!

Unlike in most scrolling beat 'em ups, the characters in *Guardian Heroes* possess some quite advanced combat techniques. The type more suited to a one-on-one beat 'em up. No surprise then, to find *GH* possesses its own brand of Versus Mode. Of course, the fighting in *GH* couldn't hope to be as in-depth as that of a dedicated one-on-one beat 'em up such as a *Street Fighter Zero*. However, what *Guardian Heroes'* Vs Mode lacks in substance, it sure makes up for in flamboyance.

SIX-PLAYER BATTLES! REPEAT! SIX PLAYOG BRATOOLS!

Forget your puny one-on-one fighting affairs, forget your VF2 Team Battle Modes. Guardian Heroes gives you not three, not four, oh forget it, you've already read the heading. Yep, up to SIX players can link-up on-screen at the same time for mass-battle action! Providing, that is, you have a Saturn multi-tap and six joypads. Otherwise it IS puny one-on-one fighting affairs for you. Mind you, this poses the question – how can you have a six-player battle with only five selectable characters? Time for your next dose of shock treatment folks...

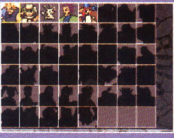






CHOOSE FROM, ERM... 45 FIGHTING CHARACTERS? GOOD LORD!

You read that one right! *GH* gives you a massive 45 characters to choose from! And how so? Well, when you first switch on the game you only have six Vs Mode players to choose from (the five heroes and Edward the rabbit). However, each enemy you defeat in Story Mode appears in your Vs Mode character select chart. So, there's even more incentive to search through Story Mode, to find – and store – the full quota of characters. Some characters, such as the child citizen, are virtually useless. Others, such as the Heavenly God, are near indestructible. Don't underestimate Edward M Cognac though. He might only have two moves, but he's one of the most powerful fighters in the game! We've managed to find 40 of the characters. You'll have to find the final five yourself.





THE TREASURE TRAIL!

Treasure's track record of producing games that deliver superb gameplay as well as mind-boggling visuals, goes back further than you may imagine. Before the company was formed by managing director Mr Maekawa in June 1992, they were actually part of the Konami in-house development division that produced such superb titles as Super NES *Probotector*. But it was under the 'Treasure' label that this team created some of the greatest Mega Drive games ever seen...



GUNSTAR HEROES: SEPT '93
To this day, still arguably the greatest Mega Drive game ever made! This is the game that was responsible for bringing sprite scaling and rotation to the Megadrive. Treasure are forever being asked when they're going to produce a sequel. "When we're ready!" is the reply.



McDONALD'S TREASURE LAND ADVENTURE: NOV '93
It's rumoured this was actually Treasure's first game, although it wasn't released until after Gunstar Heroes. Don't be put off by the license – Treasure Land is an top platformer, packed with insanely original ideas. It's guaranteed to turn you



DYNAMITE HEADDY: SEPT '94
It was a year later that Treasure returned with this masterpiece. Combining the staggering special effects of Gunstar with the wackiness of Treasure Land, Headdy is an amazing platform title. Those that criticised it, never played far enough to discover the alien madness that took

MULTI-COLOURED MAYHEM!

As in *Super StreetFighter 2*, each of the 45 fighters comes in six different colours. This isn't just a fancy touch though, as it was in *SSF2*. All six-players can select the same character, so you NEED six colours just to set the fighters apart!



▲ No embarrassing matching outfits here, as six Ancient Magic Weapons prepare for battle!



▲ The bigger the fighters you choose, the more ludicrous the battle!

▲ If you look carefully, you can see that each of the little characters next to the energy bars is a moving miniature version of the main fighters!



ALIEN SOLDIER: MAY '95

Supposedly based on the Gunstar Heroes game engine, Alien Soldier seemed a disappointing game initially, throwing boss after boss at you in quick succession. However, early warm-up levels belied an excellent difficulty curve that led to some truly terrifying end-bosses!



LIGHT CRUSADER: AUG 1995

Treasure's first step into the realm of RPGs. A suprising departure from both the look and gameplay of their previous outings, Light Crusader provided enjoyable and challenging puzzles, together with a gripping plot. Unfortunately, it did too good a job of building you up for a suprisingly disappointing end.

VERDICT

SATURN

I'm such a fan of Treasure's games, that I've been unsure whether I was looking at this game in a totally unbiased way. But in my moments of clarity, it's quite clear that *Guardian Heroes* is a monumental achievement. The attention to detail is staggering! Bizarrely, rather than just going for slick graphics, Treasure have created an almost rough look. The sprites can look blocky as they scale in and out. Initially this looks ugly and outdated, but after you realise how much is going on, it just looks like the sign of a powerful game engine at work. Details such as the mini-sprites by the energy bars demonstrate that there's no sloppy programming here. Adding multiple routes to a scrolling beat 'em up could seem like window dressing if done half-heartedly, but the sheer variety of routes on offer here creates a gripping adventure – and I can't even read the plot on the version I played! Vs Mode, while not serious as a fighting game, is simply one of the most OTT affairs you'll ever play! In every way, *Guardian Heroes* oozes hard-graft, genuine enthusiasm and a desire for playability. Superb stuff!

TOM GUISE

SECOND OPINION

SATURN

As you know, I've been anticipating the arrival of the first Treasure game on the Saturn for many months. They are a genius team, whose work always leaves me astounded. And I'm glad to say they haven't let me down. Much more than just a side-scrolling beat 'em up, *GH* demonstrates the phenomenal power of the Saturn in handling masses of sprites; all possessing intelligent attack patterns, jumping through three planes of depth, scaling from miniature to gigantic, as the viewpoint centres in then zooms out of the fray to convey the action. In other words, it's impressive. Treasure always include loads of secrets too, and with this they go overboard. It's absolutely necessary to play the game through at least six times, before even half the playable characters become available for Versus Mode. A lesser team might have offered this crazy six-player option as the whole game, so it's incredible to think that this is 'merely' an extension to enjoy when not fathoming the depths of Story Mode. Add to this a top class Manga intro, which is just like tuning in to your favourite action series, and what you have is spectacular addition to your Saturn collection.

PAUL DAVIES

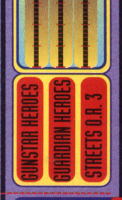
THIRD OPINION

SATURN

It's almost guaranteed that you're thinking "What's so special about that?" as you look at pictures of the game. In fact, you'll probably think that when you first play it, as did nearly everyone who had a go here, but after a bit of play you'll realise how special it really is. Right from the beginning it's non-stop action - and not just "banging on the buttons" action, but real *Streetfighter 2*-style "special moves and combos" action - you don't have any time to get bored! The multiple paths and varying plot depending on your choice of route and character keep you playing until every level has been discovered, and the multi-player battle mode is fantastic! The knowledge that there are loads of hidden characters makes you want to find and collect the whole set, even though many of them are completely useless! The Mega Drive Treasure games looked impressive but still didn't really hook me in the same way as they did Paul and Tom, but *Guardian Heroes* has got the depth and gameplay to match the spectacular graphics and sound. Ignore your initial reactions and take my advice - get it.

EDWARD M LOMAS

SCORES



GRAPHICS 92
Excellent cartoon style combined with powerful effects!

ANIMATION 90
Super smooth considering the sheer amount of sprites on-screen.

MUSIC 92
Tons of tunes that change according to the situation. Great!

SOUND EFFECTS 91
Plenty of thwacking and yelling. Perfect beat 'em up stuff!

GAMEPLAY 93
Addictive fighting fun with a thrilling adventure atmosphere.

VALUE 90
Finding the 45 characters for Vs Mode makes the fun last.

OVERALL
Sprite-based mayhem on a scale you never could have imagined! A brilliant scrolling beat 'em up!

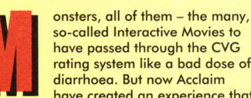


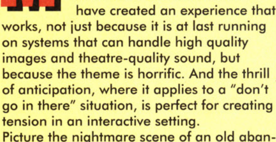
SATURN
PUZZLE ADVENTURE
ACCLAIM
£39.99
OUT MARCH
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PLAYSTATION VERSION PLANNED
NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE

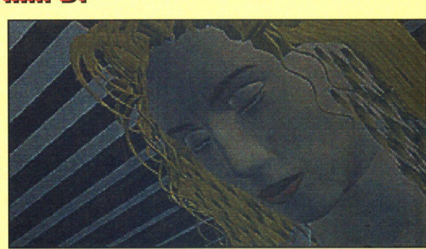
D's DINING

Nosferatu. Cronos. Vlad. The Count – Dracula has gone by many names. As we approach the 21st Century, you can call him D.









Monsters, all of them – the many, so-called Interactive Movies to have passed through the CVG rating system like a bad dose of diarrhoea. But now Acclaim have created an experience that works, not just because it is at last running on systems that can handle high quality images and theatre-quality sound, but because the theme is horrific. And the thrill of anticipation, where it applies to a "don't go in there" situation, is perfect for creating tension in an interactive setting.

Picture the nightmare scene of an old abandoned building, where the bogeyman is said to hide. And you have been dared to go inside, not knowing which corner he is using to surprise you, or which door seals his lair. Add to that the horror of finding some bloody victims, asserting the fact that he is real and you are in danger. This is the level of tension under which Acclaim intend players to make a series of life or death decisions in *D's Dining Table*.







CVG leads computer generated heroine, Laura, to her destiny with the Prince of Darkness, and reports the gory details.



The scene is set, Hollywood style...





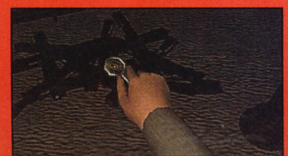
You think this is bad – wait until you see the recurring Dining Room scene!

DARE TO TOUCH

Examination of significant objects is carried out by the press of just one button. After approaching a mirror, for example, the button prompts Laura to stare deep inside and discover its chilling secret. Such rewards are usually just food for thought – clues to help her make sense of another problem elsewhere. But in some instances, searching reveals artifacts such as keys that are used to unlock still more of the mystery. Don't expect everything to be so obvious, however, as even the simple turn of a handle can cause a different result many times over.







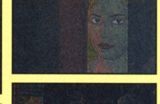


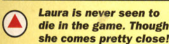


TABLE

HEART IN MOUTH

After gathering the courage to move, exploring the strange house before you isn't too complicated. Though there are only set paths to tread, the general illusion is one of freedom. Movement is only forward, however, with any left or right turns made on the spot. Significant objects are approached by pressing toward when up close, and retreated from by tapping away. From such simple commands, the on-screen drama plays like a true horror flick: blind corners, behind the head obstructed teasers not allowing you see what's following up the rear – you get the picture. Suspense is felt every step of the way.


Laura is never seen to die in the game. Though she comes pretty close!

FUTURE SHOCKS X3

What little dialogue there is in D amounts to a disembodied voice, telling Laura to head back home where it's safe. So all clues are given pictorially, but the order in which they're intended to be tackled is difficult to guess. For guidance, players have the right to make use of the detective's pocket mirror which somehow displays the next key port of call. The mirror can only handle so much of this psychic energy before shattering, and three peeks into the netherworld are all she's allowed.



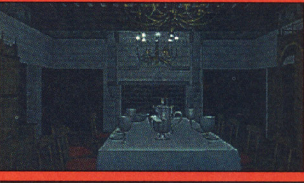



MAKE YOURSELF A TOMB

Our torment begins as Laura is sent to investigate a series of gruesome murders at the city hospital. The killer is reported to be inside the building still, and there is evidence of his handiwork strewn all about the corridors. But as the detective searches for clues, she is met by a supernatural apparition – a floating sliver of water, roughly circular in shape. Curious, the girl reaches out to touch it. The apparition grows and envelopes her. She closes her eyes for protection, and opens them to find everything around her – physical and psychological – has changed. Players are given precisely two hours to make sense of this confusion.







This is the ghostly apparition which appears at key intervals to warn Laura.

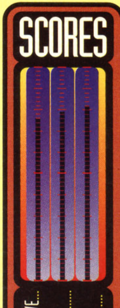
VERDICT

SATURN

Recent horror flicks seem to have lost their chill factor. They're pretty good at disgusting their audience, but skin-tightening suspense is rare. The last place I expected to experience fear was in a video game, but Acclaim had my hair stood on end with *D*. As a puzzle-solving exercise the game is nowhere near as complex as Broderbound's *Myst* – but I doubt that's how the designers intended it. This whole scenario is engineered to induce wide-eyed terror – and it succeeds. I wouldn't usually recommend such a linear experience, but this whole concept is so well executed from start to finish that I'm sure most people will appreciate it. Not a great game in the traditional sense, but a leader of its field and guaranteed to give you nightmares.

PAUL DAVIES

SCORES



GRAPHICS 93
Convey in graphic detail the chill air of a classic horror flick.

ANIMATION 90
Lifelike on the whole, though some character movement is odd.

MUSIC 89
Used to generate atmosphere more than anything else.

SOUND EFFECTS 90
Responsible for many a hot drink being spilled down trousers.

GAMEPLAY 78
Preordained, but totally engrossing with little frustration.

VALUE 74
Linear as a the tone of a TV test-card, but a class piece of work.

OVERALL
You have to play this game more than once, as it is amazing. But, sadly, more than once is probably enough.

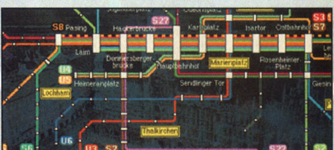
78

GABRIEL KNIGHT 2: THE BEAST

- PC CD-ROM
- GRAPHIC ADVENTURE
- SIERRA
- £44.99
- OUT NOW
- ONE PLAYER
- MACINTOSH VERSION-PLANNED
- NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE

The supernatural sleuth returns, and this time he's on the trail of man-eating werewolf. Be prepared to be scared.

Early in 1994, *Gabriel Knight: Sins of the Fathers* reestablished Sierra as a force to be reckoned with. The adventure, which saw hero Gabriel's transformation from second-rate novelist to exterminator of supernatural nastiness, went down a storm thanks to its gripping plot and superb atmosphere. A sequel seemed inevitable, and two years later, here it is. This time around, Gabriel has relocated to Germany from his native New Orleans. After his expedition into the realms of Voodoo in the first game, all he wants is some peace and quiet. No such luck. A young girl has been torn to bits by a werewolf, and the angry villagers demand that he, as local witchfinder general, goes and sorts it out.

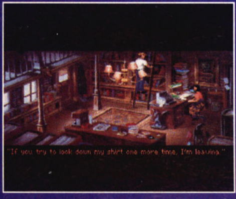


To get around Munich, Gabriel uses this handy tube map. Just click on where you want to go — you don't even need a one day travelcard.


Would you burst into a guy's room and chat to him while he's soaping his back in the bath? Gabriel would, but that's the kind of guy he is.

PHANTASMAGORIA? NO FEAR!

Apart from the storyline, the biggest different between the original *Gabriel Knight* and this sequel is the graphics. Sierra has done away with the hand-drawn graphics of the first game and replaced them with video footage, filmed on location in Bavaria with real actors. It's very similar in style to *Phantasmagoria*, the gory Sierra adventure that was universally slated for its lack of gameplay. The adventure is divided into days, each of which begins and ends with a mini-movie, and there are video cut-scenes whenever the main character does something important. But comparisons between the two games ends there. *The Beast Within* is a tough game that will keep you occupied for at least a week, is well-acted and has some decent puzzles. Miracle of miracles – an interactive movie that's actually any good!

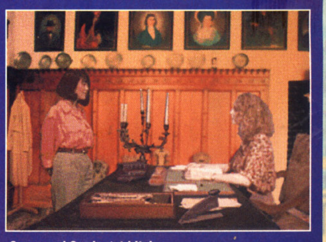


From hand-drawn graphics in the first Gabriel Knight...

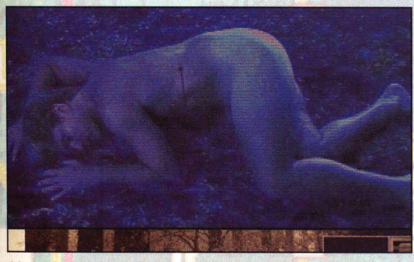

...To digitised backgrounds and live actors in the sequel. Technology, eh?

GRACE UNDER FIRE

Although Gabriel was the star of his first adventure, there are two main characters in this sequel. Grace, Gabriel's assistant in the original, is now a central character. You play Gabriel and Grace on alternate days, with Gabriel hot on the trail of the werewolf while Grace seeks out background information which will help him. Unfortunately, this doesn't quite come off. Although Grace is a strong character, her tasks, which include taking guided tours of castles and chatting to psychics, are just not as interesting as Gabriel's. The only thing which livens it up is her confrontation with Gerde, Gabriel's housekeeper and a rival for Gabriel's affections — Grace has the hots for Gabriel big time and sparks fly when she first meets the icy german blonde. Are Gabriel and Gerde really having and affair, and will Grace get her man in the end? Well, I wouldn't be so peevish as to spoil it for you...


Grace and Gerde get bitchy.

WITHIN



It's a naked dead man. And that's about as gory as it gets.

GABRIEL VS GRACE

Why is it that Gabriel has all the fun while poor old Grace has to trudge around museums, listening to tour guides all day? Who would you rather be?



Gabriel gets to experience the hustle and bustle of downtown Munich...



...While Grace is stuck in sleepy Rittersburg, famous for its post office.



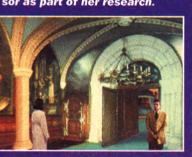
Gabriel has to risk his life crawling along a narrow ledge to get to a suspect's room.



...But Grace has the exciting job of phoning a history professor as part of her research.



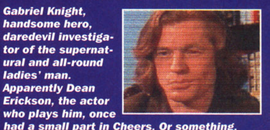
Gabriel is chased around a darkened forest by a fierce, man-eating werewolf...



...And Grace gets a guided tour of a large, German castle. Snoozerama!

STARS OF THE SHOW

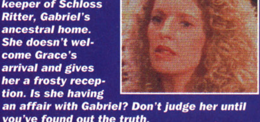
The Beast Within has provided quite a lot of unknown actors with a paycheck, but doesn't star anyone famous. Still, the characters are more important than the people who play them after all.



Gabriel Knight, handsome hero, daredevil investigator of the supernatural and all-round ladies' man. Apparently Dean Erickson, the actor who plays him, once had a small part in Cheers. Or something.



Grace Nakimura used to help Gabriel run his second hand bookshop in New Orleans. Now she must come to Germany where her research may well save his life. Played by Joanne Takahashi. Never heard of her.



Gerde is the housekeeper of Schloss Ritter, Gabriel's ancestral home. She doesn't welcome Grace's arrival and gives her a frosty reception. Is she having an affair with Gabriel? Don't judge her until you've found out the truth.

The mysterious Baron Von Glower runs an exclusive hunting club, which Gabriel needs to join and investigate. He's suspiciously friendly towards our Gabe, but what's he trying to hide? Questions, questions.

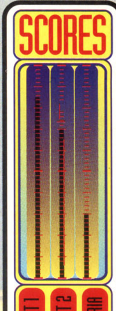
VERDICT

PC CD-ROM

I loved Gabriel Knight 1, which was one of the most involving, atmospheric adventures I've ever played. But when I saw The Beast Within with its Phantasmagoria-style presentation and graphics, I really thought Sierra had cocked it up by using video. Thankfully I was wrong. This is a brilliant game with tons of atmosphere and a great plot. Even the acting is good. The video quality is excellent, and the music suits the game well without being too intrusive. But I do have two reservations. Grace's sections are sometimes tedious – it would have been more exciting if you could have stuck to playing Gabriel, or else Sierra should have included some things to liven up Grace's days, rather than walking round museums and clicking on exhibits. Snore. Secondly, the puzzles aren't quite as imaginative as they were in the first game, which was more challenging and fun. But overall this is a cracking game, and shouldn't be ignored.

CAL JONES

SCORES





GRAPHICS 90
Good quality video and attractive locations

ANIMATION 90
Characters are filmed, then digitised – it can't get more lifelike.

MUSIC 85
Some atmospheric music, but nothing memorable or catchy.

SOUND EFFECTS 88
Clear speech and background sound, plus spooky wolf howls.

GAMEPLAY 84
Gripping stuff, but the Grace stages are not as fun than Gabriel's.

VALUE 87
A big, tough game which takes some time to finish.

OVERALL 89
An atmospheric, stunning game, but not quite as charming or imaginative as the first Gabriel adventure.

- JAGUAR
- RACING
- MIRACLE DESIGNS
- £39.99
- OUT NOW
- 1-2 PLAYERS
- NO OTHER VERSION PLANNED
- AVAILABLE

ATARI KARTS

And you thought that Super X wounded the Jag's reputation. Atari Karts could well be the system's maim of the year!

Two years after its release in this country, and the Jaguar still doesn't have the definitive killer game to sell it. Sure, it has *Tempest 2000* – but even that seems to be a game that us journalists seem to have payed any real attention to. And maybe everybody places too much importance on *Doom*, which is still very much the PC's domain. So when Miracle Designs were assigned to the *Atari Karts* project, you know damn well what was expected of them – a rival to the awesome *Super Mario Kart* on the Super NES. Surely, with the 2X32-bit power of the slick black system, there was potential to blast Nintendo's old 16-bit dinosaur (and his pals for that matter) off the road. Any bets?



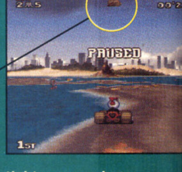
▲ *Courses are associated with characters, same as they do in Mario Kart.*

BLOT ON THE LANDSCAPE

It's always a nice surprise finding an option in a game that nobody has thought of before. In *Atari Karts*, players have the choice between Hill or Flat mode. Not that it makes very much difference. 'Slight Undulation' mode, we think, is more appropriate. And, while we're on the subject of road features, though the resolution is noticeably higher than in *Super Mario Kart*, the necessary details are hard to decipher. For instance, differentiating between innocent dark mud, and obstructive block of stone is tricky – which is never very helpful, as we're sure you can appreciate.

THANKS BUT NO THANKS

We don't want to get caught up in legal wrangles here, so let's just say that the power-ups in *Atari Karts* are not entirely conducive to the amount of fun this game could possibly offer. The four we've encountered are collected by driving over their icons painted on the tracks – same as Mario Kart. A rabbit, that is most probably intended to be a hare, gives extra speed, while the Tortoise shell seems to slow everyone esle down. Steering wheels apparently enable tighter cornering – though they don't feel to make any difference – and there's a tricky Reverse icon which exchanges left for right, and vice versa. There are no projectiles, and nothing which may be laid on the track to make an obstacle. Useful, yes. Worthwhile, no.



MEET THE GANG

Couldn't let this review go by without first introducing the seven drivers – finest exponents of charisma and style that they are:



REGIUS – *a real turkey.*

SKULLY – *a skeleton.*



PULPITO – *a squid.*

MIZ TRESS – *a g-g-girl.*

BENTLEY BEAR – *an embarassment.*



VULKY – *what's a Vulk?*



PTARMIGAN – *Rhymes with Pcardigan.*

LEAGUE OF ITS OWN

No matter how skillful you think you are, the entry level for Atari Karts is strictly for beginners – players are restricted from entering anything else until they have completed the first set of six courses. Once this is out of the way, there is a bonus circuit to attempt. Anyone who's successful may race as an extra secret character called Haratari – a Predator in a Samurai outfit. His performance is noticeably not that much different from the rest of the drivers.

▲ *Shiver... it's the secret Samurai – Haratari!!!*

VERDICT

JAGUAR

At this late stage, it's true to say that the opportunity is no longer there for a *Mario Kart* clone to succeed. Nintendo have promised *Super Mario Kart R*, only a few months away, and if anybody is still interested in the classic original, you can pick it up with a brand new Super NES for just 15 or 20 notes more than this Jaguar cart on its own. Especially nobody's going to buy such a shameful example as *Atari Kart*. In a way, Atari have engineered an even greater disaster here by causing everyone to compare the two systems, and find that the older, less expensive one is still a far better option – once again leaving the poor old Jag sitting on the shelf. On top of that, they've embarrassed the remaining loyal fans with another trash piece of software: Worse than GCSE standard artwork; appalling music; dreadful control; uninspiring goals. How Atari have a hope when pitching this kind of rot against *Sega Rally*, and *Wipeout* I do not even try to understand. Even as a fan of the machine, I can't help but feel the Jaguar's days are numbered.

PAUL DAVIES

SCORES

GRAPHICS	42
ANIMATION	60
MUSIC	3
SOUND EFFECTS	30
GAMEPLAY	15
VALUE	20
OVERALL	24

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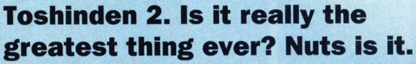
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BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 2



What was once thought of as the greatest beat 'em up ever has been rebuilt and improved to become Toshinden 2. Is it really the greatest thing ever? Nuts is it.







Right at the start of the 32-bit games crisis (just before it developed into the 32-bit games war) there was Toshinden on the PlayStation. At that time, the only other games available were crud, except Ridge Racer of course, meaning that the first ever texture-mapped 3D home beat 'em up seemed something really special. The incredible graphics and sound, along with the ludicrous special effects and amazing moves, impressed everyone around. Leading to some wild "better than VF" comments, and really high scores. But, as often happens, Toshinden is another great looking game that hasn't stood up to constant playing – in fact it didn't really stand up to much at all.

ME AND MY FRIENDS

On the new character select screen there is a bonus "?" box. When highlighted, it flicks through all of the characters at high speed, letting you choose one randomly. Also, any secret characters you find are added to this selection and the choosing of them can be made easier by holding the Select button which slows the rate of the box. As you'd expect, *Toshinden 2* also retains all of the original game's characters and adds an extra three regular characters to them. They are:







CHAOS (1)
Height: 235cm
Weight: 70kg
Age: 35
Blood Type: B
Nationality: Sri Lanka

This strange fellow's a mad executive who attacks with a large scythe. His moves are all very strange and unpredictable, like the one where he crawls around on the floor, often falling out of the ring.

GAIA (2)
Height: 214cm
Weight: 91kg
Age: 40
Blood Type: O
Nationality: Japan

The final boss from the original Toshinden is now one of the regular crowd. Though he's lost his long spines, he's still armed with that ludicrous sword which can inflict massive damage.

TRACY (3)
Height: 164cm
Weight: 48kg
Age: 21
Blood Type: B
Nationality: U.S.A.

The small police officer carries electro-stun rods around with her, using them to zap opponents. She's very agile and difficult to hit.

























SECRET CHARACTERS, YOU SAY?

Though it isn't at all surprising these days, Toshinden 2 features quite a few hidden characters. After beating all of the characters in one-player mode, players have to beat Uranus and Master, the two bosses. Once beaten, they can be chosen on the character select screen.







The mysterious angel-like character can use large wings and a magic bow and arrow to wipe out enemies.

Height: ???
Weight: ???
Age: ???
Blood Type: ???
Nationality: ???



Height: ???
Weight: ???
Age: ???
Blood Type: ???
Nationality: ???



Master isn't actually all that scary-looking for a boss but the magical swords and fireballs which can be produced at will most definitely ARE scary.





It's fairly obvious that these aren't the only hidden characters – there's Sho for one – and rest assured we'll be giving you info on everyone else in the future.













The Overdrive bar in the bottom-right is totally empty. With a few attacks, it charges up to full, meaning that Eiji can release his incredible multi-hit attack on the right.



OVERDRIVE

At the bottom of the screen, each player has got a new "Overdrive" bar. This is charged up with every special attack and successful hit until it reaches maximum power. When it does, it flashes orange and the player has a few seconds to perform their extra Overdrive move. These can take off large amounts of damage (well over 50% in some cases) and are very easy to perform – you just hit all four attack buttons. As well as the Overdrive moves, everyone's got Comeback moves which can only be performed when the player's energy bar is in the danger area and a bigger selection of special moves than before.

POSER!

As with *Streetfighter Alpha*, each character can pose at any time during a round, simply by pressing the Select button. This leaves players vulnerable for a few seconds but can reap huge benefits. With careful timing, the pose can be used to encourage weakened players to move close for an attack – just as you recover and smack them in the head.







The Toshinden 2 intro combines film of people dressed up as characters, game footage and some nice rendered bits as well. It's also got some of Tom C's favourite music.

WALK-IN WARDROBE

Normally, characters only own two differently-coloured outfits so that they can fight against themselves but, as with recent games, the *Toshinden 2* characters have actually got four different costume colours. By using a certain button combination to select fighters (hold Select and press a kick button on the random box), players can pick their favourite outfit in which to do battle.

Here are Ellis' four different costumes. Our favourite's the mauve as it goes nicely with the tone of her hair.





FISHER PRICE ACTIVITY CENTRE

The most noticeable feature of *Toshinden 2* is obviously the graphics. They've been drastically impoved from the original game and they include some spectacularly good lighting effects. The light sourcing is particularly pretty and adds a nice feeling of solidity to the characters. One strange thing, however, is that not all of the explosions and clothing are transluscent, unlike the effects in the original game which made good use of the PlayStation's custom hardware.



(Above) This stage is one of the more impressive as the light sources are constantly spinning around the players. This creates lovely shadows on the floor and hurts your head as you struggle to concentrate on what you're doing.



This stage starts off in relative darkness...



Until the curtains open, letting the sunlight flow in.

LOOK AT MEEEE!

There are four views which can be selected during the game. They aren't really much use, other than to show off the great graphics.



REGULAR



OVERHEAD

FAR

ANGLE



VERDICT

PLAYSTATION

Even though I was really impressed with graphics of the original *Toshinden* when it came into the office over a year ago, I didn't really think that much of the actual game. It seems to be a similar story with *Toshinden 2*. The graphics look totally awesome in still pictures as the light-sourcing and texture mapping effects work brilliantly but what can't be conveyed in the pictures is that the characters move in exactly the same way as in the first game. This is *Toshinden 2*'s biggest problem: it's far too similar to what wasn't such a good game anyway. A-lot of the moves are spectacular but stupid (many of them sending you flying out of the ring) and the characters don't feel as though you've got total control over them. Even though the game's a slight improvement over the first, I still reckon that it's just a duff 2D game stuck into 3D just for the sake of it. There's nothing here to make you want to play the game for more than a few minutes, meaning that it's a total waste of money. Except for the nutters who thought the first one was good.

ED LOMAS

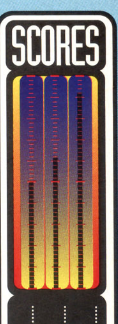
VERDICT

PLAYSTATION

Before the original *Toshinden*, Takara were best known for their skillful Super NES conversions of SNK beat 'em ups – they had never come up with anything of their own. *T2* proves that Takara are not the innovators some people would have liked to believe. Instead of improved gameplay, what we get with *T2* is an attempt to thrill with better graphics. The light-sourcing is impressive, and the 3-D models of the fighters would look fine on some CG demonstration. The game logic, sadly, is a joke. Don't touch it.

PAUL DAVIES

SCORES





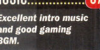


GRAPHICS 91
Great lighting effects and top-quality characters.

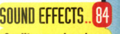


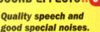


ANIMATION 85
Smooth but unrealistic character movement.



MUSIC 87
Excellent intro music and good gaming BGM.

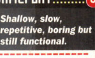




SOUND EFFECTS 84
Quality speech and good special noises.

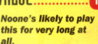


GAMEPLAY 60
Shallow, slow, repetitive, boring but still functional.





VALUE 45
Noone's likely to play this for very long at all.



OVERALL
It's Toshinden with a few extra characters, new graphics and dull "action". A waste of money for owners of the first game and not a good buy for anyone with sense.





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▲ *Above...*



▲ *...in 3D...*



▲ *...or high-res 3D.*

Yawn. That's probably the first thing you did when you glanced over this page. Not a small yawn, mind. But one of those 'turn the page quickly or my jaw will surely break' kind of spasms. And we don't blame you at all. Because our initial reactions was precisely the same. Pinball just never seems to cut it on console, unless it presents whopping great animated demons in place of solid state flippers. Even the real thing has a tough time raking in the money, unless there's a cool film license attached. Pinball, pure and simple, is boring. We thought. *True Pinball* is not the real thing, though it's a near as damn it simulation thanks to some extremely detailed CG renders. Neither is it supported by a major film license. It has pedigree though in the form of development team Digital Illusions, who originally wrote the game for PC and Amiga software publishers 21st Century – who have a reputation for fine Pinball simulations. First published under the name of *Pinball Illusions*, *True Pinball* proved yet another success in its field, so Ocean Software have licensed the game for release on Saturn and PlayStation. And, believe it or not, we reckon you could do a whole lot worse than take the plunger...

LAW N' JUSTICE

The theme is futuristic law enforcement, so the biggest points are awarded for completing the most 'missions'. A mission is enabled after shooting down the appropriate ramp, and completed by entering the trap. Your multi-ball opportunity on this table takes the form of Riot Mode in which the Super Jackpot is gained by bringing to justice the five flashing lights. Another hot spot is Arson Mode, in which the ball becomes the means to extinguish a fire that has broken out – crash through the bumpers to cool down.



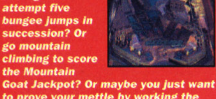
BABEWATCH

Aim to become the coolest daredevil on the coast. Surf's up when the lights are flashing – hit two balls into the traps to enable this jackpot mode. Prove your strength by pumping those flippers to keep the bumpers active. Or stomach a van load of greasy burgers without puking.



EXTREME SPORTS

This table's all about speed and daring. Have you the courage to attempt five bungee jumps in succession? Or go mountain climbing to score the Mountain Goat Jackpot? Or maybe you just want to prove your mettle by working the table's Speed Mode to its fifth degree! A-a-a-a-a-a-gghhh!!!



VIKINGS

What we have here is your bonus table, so it pays the biggest rewards for skill. Like how about scoring 15 combos to find the mystery reward. Or, if you're only in this for the fight, go right ahead and enable the Battle multi-ball. Remember vikings were once conquerors, so there are six countries to invade. ODIN!

ONE MORE AT THE TABLE

Superior machines that they are to most PC set-ups, the Saturn and PlayStation are treated to one extra table than the original *Pinball Illusions*. Bringing the total to four. As pinball is everything to do with racking up bonus points, here's where to find them – which should give you the best idea of how *True Pinball* plays (left).

SPEAK TO ME!

True Pinball is NOISY! The music is BIG. The speech is BIGGER. Both are linked to the action, so that a dropped ball causes dramatic synth stabs to belt out at you, and a voice, not unlike the one behind Killer Instinct, booms challenges to cut through the trance. Plus most bonus chances are accompanied by some kind of sonic blast!

FIXING THE VIDEO

Somehow the Video Mode remains a novelty – even in a state-of-the-art video game! This is where the virtual 'Video Screen' situated at the top of the screen is brought into play, using the flipper buttons to work a different kind of wizardry. For example on the Vikings table, you get to control a boat as it sails the high seas for bonus points. On the Law n' Justice table, Video Mode takes the form of a downtown shoot-out, using the flippers to guide the cross-hair of your automatic. Whatever happens, there's always some kind of animation appearing on this screen within a screen, which adds another dimension to the game's authenticity.





VERDICT

SATURN

While there isn't the same kind of imagination on display in *True Pinball* as we're used to with the likes of *Crue Ball* and *Devil Crash*, there's plenty of ingenuity to keep the tables alive. Just like real pinball, the combinations required for scoring big are tough to access. Even closer to reality, is that the ball is likely to head straight down the centre of the flippers until you get used to the feel of all four tables. Now here's the snag: during 90% of the game, the flippers at the bottom of each table are restricted from view in both 3D modes. This is okay for general shots, as the nearest guess usually gets some result. However, for the trick shots requiring pin-point accuracy, this situation isn't so good. I have managed to overcome this problem through continuous play – call it ESP, I dunno. But I feel that many players aren't going to have so much patience in trying to get the most form what is, otherwise, a first class simulation.

PAUL DAVIES

SCORES

GRAPHICS	83
ANIMATION	78
MUSIC	76
SOUND EFFECTS	87
GAMEPLAY	79
VALUE	82
OVERALL	



SATURN
GOLF SIM
CORE DESIGN
£39.99
OUT FEBRUARY
1-4 PLAYERS
PSX AND PC VERSIONS PLANNED
NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE

Calling all dads! Tired of not understanding video games? Wish there was a game for you? Well, why not try another golf game? If you can use those fiddly new-fangled control pads.

VIRTUAL GOLF

Why is it that when games magazines cover golf games, they always refer to them patronisingly as 'one for the dads'? Like only dads are going to enjoy golf games, right? And you can use that weakness to get them to buy you a new games console, eh?. Well excuse us, but maybe the younger generation of gamers enjoy golf too. We're sure there are plenty of young scamps out there who, after a hard day's toil at the stickle bricks box, like nothing better than to pop down to their members-only golf club and play a few rounds on the fairway. Or maybe, before a double lesson of humanities, the older prefects like to pop up to the school green for an hour of putting practice. Yeh maaan, golf is game for people of all ages! Anyway, here's another one, so show the review to your dad and maybe he'll buy you a Saturn. Ours won't though, 'cos they're hardened Vikings and don't play golf. But boy, are they good blacksmiths!



FORE BEGINNERS!

If you're a dad, you probably haven't got any idea how to play computer golf games. Fortunately, Virtual Golf is so simple even grandads can play it. At the beginning of each shot, you can select the appropriate club (although you don't have to, because you automatically get the best one). Next you can rotate around to line up yourself up for the best shot (but you don't have to, because you're automatically lined up for it). Now just press B and your Swing-O-Meter appears. Press B again and a ball moves through its curvy body. Press B to stop it exactly on the ball-shaped shadow at the top of the meter. This dictates how powerful the shot is. Now the ball drops back down the meter. Press B again to stop it at the lower ball-shaped shadow. This is your accuracy. After that, you hit the ball. And that, oldsters, is golf!



FORE COURSES!

As Virtual Golf's name suggests, this game takes golf into the realms of 3D like, erm, all other golf games have done. There are four virtual courses in all, two for the amateurs and two for the pros. At the beginning of each hole you get a fly-by of the complete fairway, complete with a spiffing commentary by some guy who sounds like a 1950's BBC news reader. From there on in, you just have to aim in the right direction (a map helps you here) and swing. Particularly impressive shots are rewarded by continuous replays of it.









FORE FLAVOURS!

Adding to regular flavour Tournament Mode – which pits you against over 60 other golfers in a multi-course golfing frenzy – there's the delicious Skins Challenge and the exotically named Derby Challenge. As in other golfing titles, Skins pits you against other golfers for a a cash prize based on the difficulty of each hole. Derby Challenge allows two players to team-up and play against other filthy-minded golfing couples. Basically, both of you take a shot each go, and the best one is used. There's also a Practice Mode for 'the dads' who can't use their joypads.

VERDICT

SATURN

I can't say that I'm ever driven to play golf games. However, when a good one comes along, I can play it for hours. To be honest though, the *PGA* games on the Megadrive are possibly the only golf sims to have this effect on me. *Virtual Golf* unfortunately isn't going to join them in my 'Fun-I've-Had-With-Golf' autobiography. It's just too simple. Whereas *PGA* adds careful factors that have to be considered to pull off a decent shot, *VG* just requires you to tap B twice on the swing-o-meter. It's not even hard to do. What's more, for a Saturn game the graphics are remarkably unremarkable. At a glance (and probably in the screenshots) they look decent, but in action, with its flat trees, stupid cardboard people who stand in your way, and poor grass effects, it looks awful. So in summary, your dad would be very disappointed with it.

TIM GUISE



PLAYSTATION
3D SHOOT 'EM UP
SONY
£IMPORT
OUT NOW
1-2 PLAYER
NO OTHER VERSIONS PLANNED
NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE

HORNED OWL

The Saturn's got the seminal Virtua Cop. The PlayStation hasn't. But now, Japanese gamers can hose down innocents aplenty with a futuristic shoot 'em up known as Horned Owl. But is it much of a hoot... or any cop for that matter?

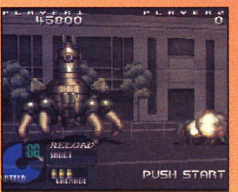
Preparation for this game had been excellently handled - Sony decided to use their own in-house team of developers, while Konami (past Kings of the arcade light-gun experience) handled the construction of the future phazer. Even master animator Masamune Shirow (famous for such Manga classics as Appleseed) agreed to illustrate the cartoon cut-scenes. The stage was set for an awesome shooting action game to give *Virtua Cop* something to worry about.
Moving back to plot basics, the game has you patrolling your city block in the guise of either Ryo Kurotu or Marco Antneli, two no-nonsense police officers with a trigger-happy attitude, especially after the metropolis is surrounded by hundreds of rampaging alien robots. The call comes in to destroy all automatons, and you duly oblige, gunning your way through stages of metal hell to find the leader of this invasion force. Sounds good doesn't it? That's what we thought...



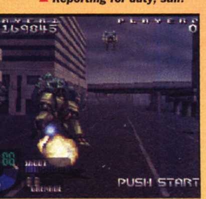
▲ Robot dogs leap in yer face. And innocents run for cover.



▲ Reporting for duty, sah!



▲ Bizarre droids aplenty. Kill 'em all!



▲ Another tin baddie hits the concrete hard.



▲ Now for some real fun; a robot boss with the heavy mini-gun ordinance.



▲ Chisled jaws and grisled chiefs for the Horned Owl crew.

MANGA MAYHEM BECKONS!

One of the few attractive features of this gun combat action game are the animated cut-scenes, created by the fantastically talented Mr Shirow. However, for Horned Owl, he appears to have chilled out a little too much. He has drawn some excellent figures, but they're not animated too well. This is shown by the three frames of animation used in the moving scenes, and the mainly static head shots. The scenes are there, nevertheless, and so perhaps we should all be thankful for that.





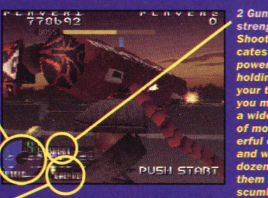


▲ The second portion of boss action on the airport stage, followed by a tunnel of terror.

THIS IS A REAL-FIRING GUN!

Okay, you've suited up into your combat armour and you've locked and loaded that phazer pistol - now you'll be wanting to know exactly what all those interesting flashing lights on your HUD mean.

1 Shield strength - Whenever you receive damage, some shield strength depletes until you reach 00. Then you die screaming in photon agony.



2 Gun strength - Shoot indicates your power - by holding in your trigger, you may fire a wider burst of more powerful energy and wipe out dozen of them robotic scumbags.

3 Grenades - These indicate (wait for it) the number of smart bomb-type grenades you have (up to a maximum of three). Fire one of these babies off, and well... you see a phut of blue light and a feeble explosion. That's it...



VERDICT

PLAYSTATION

Horned Owl looks relatively pretty from these screenshots, but fails to cut the mustard on almost every level when you actually play the darned thing. Firstly, it is far too easy – I completed it on my very first attempt, mainly because there is a refuelling pit-stop after each confrontation, meaning that with sharp-shooting you need not lose any lives whatsoever. Secondly, the movement is on rails giving you no freedom at all; and this should,you would think, have lead the programmers to create impressive polygon enemies exploding in hails of plasma fire. Nope, afraid not. The robots are ugly scaling bitmapped sprites that pixellate when up close, and look somewhat out of place against the contemporary setting. Also, everyone here expected something a little more interesting from Konami in the shape of a heavy-duty space weapon. Instead, we received a lightweight pea-shooter which, although accurate, lacked the build quality of the *Virtua Cop* pistol. When you played *Cop* for half an hour, you sprained your wrist with the frenzied reloading action. With *Horned Owl*, you can nonchalantly fire blast after blast without breaking into a sweat. The end result makes you feel less involved in the action. Rather amusingly, the PlayStation mouse gives a better control than the light-gun. This is a real shame as I'm a big fan of gun games, and every aspect of this game fails to impress. The Sega title is, unfortunately, the one that *Horned Owl* will be compared to, and there is simply no competition between the two. You may feel I've been a little harsh with this one, but any positive points are lost in a sea of mediocrity.

DAVID HODGSON

SECOND OPINION

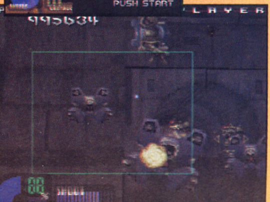
PLAYSTATION

Before everything went pear shaped, let's run through some of the better aspects that saved *Horned Owl* from an utter slating. Firstly the movement is always smooth, with polygon buildings shifting round the screen at speed, and the number of enemies that venture into your gun-sights are enormous – especially on the later levels. These two factors, coupled with suitably manic speech when anything larger than a mini metro glides into view, give the game a slight air of excitement. But this soon dissipates when the main deficiencies become apparent. At this very moment, thousands of gamers across the Land of the Rising Sun will be racing home with great excitement in their strides to plug in and play the first gun game for their PlayStations. They are, unfortunately, likely to be running back to the shop afterwards to demand some compensatory Yen, after inadvertently forking out for a disappointingly substandard release that promises much and delivers little.

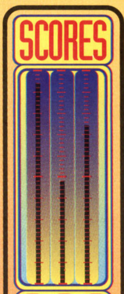
PAUL DAVIES



▼ Waves of blue robot tractors fail to dent our armour!



SCORES





Category	Score	Comment
GRAPHICS	65	Texture-mapped cityscapes populated by pixellated 2D foes.
ANIMATION	55	Low frames of animation on all the enemies except the bosses.
MUSIC	68	Instantly forgettable muzak that bumbles in the background.
SOUND EFFECTS	75	The usual explosions and laser fire, backed by clear radio chatter.
GAMEPLAY	55	Easy, with waves of baddies falling over at regular intervals.
VALUE	50	Simple to complete, lacking any must-see-again touches.

OVERALL

A bitter disappointment. Just a run-of-the-mill shooting game that features no innovations whatsoever.

58

3DO
INTERACTIVE MOVIE
ELECTRONIC ARTS
£39.99
OUT NOW
ONE PLAYER
PSX AND SATURN VERSION PLANNED
NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE

Psychics: Elderly ladies in huge flowery dresses, smelling of cabbage; cheerily inviting one and all into a darkened room for a chat with 'Frank from the netherworld'. But, nowadays there's a new breed of Doris Stokes in town...

PSYCHIC DETECTIVE







The introduction to the game features the Ericster as a wildly amusing stand-up.



Over the past couple of years, there's been a trickle of cheesy FMV 'adventure' titles trying desperately to excite punters with promises of "an interactive movie experience". The main problem that all of them suffer from is simple: they're crap. Or more specifically, they're full of second-rate acting, grainy video footage and linear gameplay. Well, here's one that tries a different tact, as software giant Electronic Arts attempts to change the face of this stigmatised genre with a trance-induced overhaul...

The plot is strained to say the least, and if it wasn't for the slick presentation afforded by the developers, this would've simply been dismissed as another yawnsome stab into the arena of FMV pokery. But it isn't. After the weird pastel shades of the intro screen, we are treated to a video plot synopsis in glorious full screen, where your character is introduced. This is the Case of the Black Diamond, and you play the part of the fresh-faced Eric Fox; "The Psychic Flash", on a mission to discover the hideous reason for the murder of Vladimir Pozok (or should that be Prosaic?). You ain't just any old Dick – you have the power to meld with the minds of other people and objects, via the focusing abilities of Pozok's daughter, to gain further information in your quest. After this initial shock and the confusion – both as a player and as Eric – of riding around the heads of other folk, the investigation begins in earnest...



Deaths and strange flaskback scenes every other minute ensure a feeling of stark, abject TERROR!!





THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES...

In your cranium-churning quest to search out the paranormal killer, you encounter a dozen or so 'interactive' chappies to aid you in your psychic sleuthing. Here are mug-shots of the more important members you'll be infiltrating, and remember - suspect everyone and head-hop furiously!



Eric Fox

Fantastic wooden acting and a lack of charisma; the perfect combination for an interactive movie 'star.' Get used to that face - you're him!

Vladimir Pozok

Dead bloke with very sick mind. Be prepared for a change of underwear when checking his thoughts out.

Laina Pozok

Well, hello... a fancy lady and no mistake! The ice queen of the piece who requested your help initially. Perhaps a spot of romance as well...?

Chad Bitalski

Hey, you're Laina's cousin, ain't ya? For a Ruskie, you've got a remarkably American first name. Not another nondescript character, surely?

Madam Tikunov

Now we really are dredging the bottom of the barrel in terms of taste and decency. The Pozok's family retainer has breath that can kill at a hundred feet, but is central to your mission.

Monica Pozok


Hunka Munka... another fancy lady, but this one's a spoiled brat to boot. This is Laina's little sister, and has her own secrets hidden deep inside her head.

ENJOY YOUR TRIP...

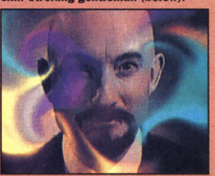
The action moves from a gathering at the Pozok residence to a variety of familiar locations (such as a bar) with Eric collecting the memories of whoever he bumps into on his travels. A number of weirdos are available to aid or hinder your progress of head hopping, and if you meld with the wrong type of person (or pick up an item with 'bad karma'), you're treated to a frenzied visual trip of pantaloon-filling proportions. Once you've gained enough information (and even if you haven't) and secured a Psychic Collector (which magnifies your thoughts still further), you return to battle with the game's arch villain by playing the fabled Black Diamond Game; after which your fun ends.







The Black Diamond game in full swing. Pit your plethora of clues and wits against the chin-stroking gentleman (below).



IN ME 'EAD, SON!

This game should receive at least a '15' rating when released over here, and the reasons why are simple. Apart from the smattering of (gosh!) rude words and the inclusion of scantily-clad ladies, there are the visuals. Some outstandingly trippy effects, accompanied by a cacophony of insane warblings, occur throughout the game, and these can really and seriously freak out those of a less-than-stable temperament. These animated head-explosions appear to be influenced by some pretty powerful grade A narcotics, so be warned, and prepare for THE FEAR!

A snot explosion threatens this chap.



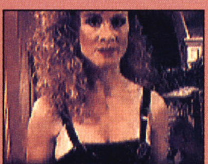


A man with a moustache suffers mammoth head mutilations!

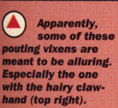








Apparently, some of these pouting vixens are meant to be alluring. Especially the one with the hairy claw-hand (top right).







VERDICT

3DO

Those space cadets at EA have succeeded in creating an extremely different, genuinely atmospheric and marginally playable interactive movie that I enjoyed from start to finish. So why didn't it score higher? Well, firstly, the 'interaction' is still relatively sparse, with the action continuing whatever you decide to do, and despite a couple of points where you make a conscious thought, you still had that feeling of watching a cheesy B-movie rather than taking over the persona of the Ericster. As usual, the cast weren't inspiring enough to form any attachment towards, but the actual adventure was well constructed and entertaining enough for me to play through a number of times. The other main problem was that the entire adventure lasts only half an hour (despite three CD changes), and I expect a lot more gameplay than that for my money. What saves this title are the many 'kerazy' out-of-your-head sequences that add a genuine feeling of insanity to the game, but even so this is still too short and too linear for my liking.

DAVID HODGSON

SCORES

DOUBLE SWITCH MCD
PSYCHIC DETECTIVE...
TWISTED...

GRAPHICS 85
Excellent (if a little small) video images with freaky effects.

ANIMATION 78
Smooth full colour video on a small screen mostly.

MUSIC 75
Not much in the way of music, but crystal clear speech.

SOUND EFFECTS .. 80
Marvellous grunts, and cackles accompany the twisted visuals.

GAMEPLAY 68
Sometimes confusing and still too linear.

VALUE 65
More than one investigation would have helped immensely.

OVERALL ....
A novel game(that has the bonus of being a sickening adult trip from start to finish) that is let down by initially confusing gameplay that ends... FAR TOO SOON.

72

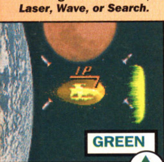


Take a deep breath, blaster brains – it's the last one you're gonna get until you reach the end of the latest Darius trip!

DARIUS GAIDEN



Increases Silver Hawk's fire power, through four degrees: Standard, Laser, Wave, or Search.



Collected to boost the effectiveness of the Silver Hawk's napalm bombs, best of all is the Homing variety.



Builds the Silver Hawk's armour – from standard (Green) to Super (Silver) or even Hyper (Gold).







We've seen just about every gimmick a shoot 'em up can throw at us, here at CVG: vertical, horizontal; futuristic style, even vintage. But the one machine we remember most is Taito's *Darius 2*, as it is the only one ever to have made use of a triple-monitor set-up – where the action is viewed 'Wide Screen'.

Darius is a very popular series of coin-ops, which is why Taito have been called upon to produce home conversions from time to time. Probably the best incarnation being for the Mega Drive, back in 1991 (the Super Famicom version slowed down a lot). Distinctive for its use of 'mech' marine life, in answer to Irem's classic alien angle, the *Darius* series is also notoriously tough. *Gaiden* is the meanest kettle of fish these shores have ever sunk their hooks into! Though it never featured over here as a coin-op, thanks to Acclaim, *Darius Gaiden* is to join *Galactic Attack* (aka *Layer Section*) on the red hot Saturn shoot 'em up play list. Here's a preliminary brief before you take off and buy it.

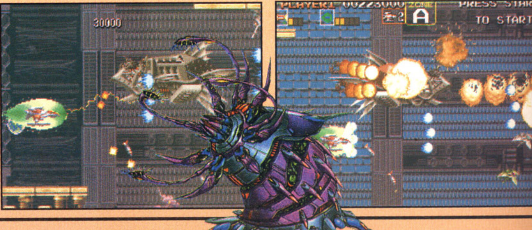




SCRATCH MY BACK

Get a load of this! A skilled pilot may hypnotise Mid-Level Bosses into fighting for the good side. This is achieved by targeting something known as the Control Ball, which sits on their heads. Collect it once it has broken loose, and the Mid-level Boss turns against its own side. Though only for a short time before exploding into space dust.





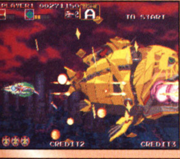
BIRDS OF PREY

While the Silver Hawks don't have the most impressive arsenal around, it's interesting how their power is increased. At the top of the screen are icons representing Missiles and Armour, beside which are bars representing their status. When certain enemies are killed, they drop a shield. Collect the relevant ones to increase Missile and Armour strength. Each time the bars are completely filled, the Missile or Armour status improves.



BIGGER FISH TO FRY

Everything about *Darius Gaiden* is pretty standard – until you get to the bosses! These fellers are so awesome, Taito must have spent many long months at the drawing board, devising the most intricate, hard-finned trouble causers imaginable. Here's a selection from the menu. They're all fantastic.










HIDDEN DEPTHS

Lucky for you there are extra power-ups found throughout the planet Vadis, only some of them aren't so easily detected. Pilots are advised to keep a look out for ghostly shapes that appear when fired at. Hit enough times, these turn out to be yet more shields, or even 1-Ups (extra lives).



Just to show you that Darius Gaiden is a simultaneous two-player game. Player two isn't so good here though!

SONGS OF THE SEA

Imagine the kind of music that supports the action in Darius Gaiden. Guitars, right? No. Hardcore Techno? Wrong. Ambient, then? Well... kind of. You see DG plays to the tune of some weirdo opera singing, backed by the type of muzac you'd expect to hear playing in the shopping mall of future city. It's the work of the Taito Sound Team – aka 'Zuntata' – who are obviously highly regarded by their company as they have their own logo. Strange though it may be, their music certainly grows on you. In fact it's some of the most entrancing music we've heard in a game, though it requires listening through a decent set of speaker to appreciate.



VERDICT

SATURN

This game is so tough, you have to hold your breath just to stop your head imploding! Don't be mislead by first impressions: this isn't the moronic, seen better days kind of experience it might appear. *Darius Gaiden* must surely rank among the meanest, yet still gloriously impressive blasters to have surfaced anywhere. Best of all because the greatest visual rewards don't appear straight away – you have to earn them. And the only way to do that is to play the game till your brain hurts, calculating where best to position the Silver Hawk while dodging the mental AA fire, and still trying to score hits. The more you play the better the game gets, for a couple of reasons: Number one because your evasion skills improve, making the destruction all the more thrilling. Second one being that the incredible detail Taito's artists have worked into every last sprite can only be appreciated the more you see them in action. The Control Ball is an especially clever feature. Players raised on a diet of easily defeated 16-bit shoot 'em ups (excluding *Gaires* and *Hellfire* on MD), had better prepare to grow up soon to face *Darius Gaiden* – it takes no prisoners, and even leaves the victors feeling well and truly shaky. If you love your shooters, here is one catch to feel proud of.

PAUL DAVIES

SCORES

LAYER SECTION........
DARIUS GAIDEN........
IN THE HUNT........

GRAPHICS 86
Puny at first, but the first of the bosses puts paid to that idea!

ANIMATION 82
On the smaller craft it isn't so good. But the bosses are excellent.

MUSIC 83
Weirdest we've heard in a while. But it'll haunt your sleep.

SOUND EFFECTS 79
Sort of thin, though above the usual standard overall.

GAMEPLAY 88
Like trying to eat a great cake, that's full of tiny razors!

VALUE 85
So tough. Plus it's so impressive that you're sure go back to it.

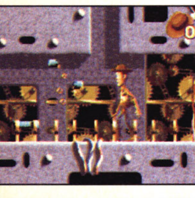
OVERALL
Classic, side-scrolling action, featuring some truly amazing graphics. Love that Saturn, and its sprite-handling prowess! Guaranteed to squeeze your brain dry.

87

MEGADRIVE........
VARIOUS GAME STYLES..
SEGA..................
£49.99.................
OUT EASTER............
1 PLAYER.........
NO OTHER VERSIONS PLANNED...............
SNES VERSION ALSO AVAILABLE............

TOY STORY

The Mega Drive pulls an incredible rabbit out of the hat with Disney's Toy Story – the game of the hit movie. It's a quantum leap in 16-bit graphics, but what about the gameplay?





▲ *Buzz gives chase, as Woody jumps to avoid falling food.*

Whatever form it takes, *Toy Story* is rewriting the rules. As Disney's latest animated movie (the word 'cartoon' seems almost derisory) the follow-up to Pocahontas is the world's first entirely computer-generated movie. Using techniques previously dismissed by many as being devoid of real character and expression, *Toy Story* defied all those critics. From a relatively low-key release, *Toy Story* went on to outgross Goldeneye, and become America's top box office attraction over Christmas.

A licensed game was inevitable, but Disney's advanced press releases were dismissed as outlandish. "The *Toy Story* video game offers players with 16-bit game machines a truly 'next generation' experience," claimed Marc Teren, Disney Interactive's vice-president. "The game offers an exciting opportunity for Disney to shatter 16-bit video game limitations and literally broaden the entire 16-bit market. The result is a game you have to play to believe." The first screen shots reinforced the growing rumours that *Toy Story* on the Mega Drive would rival the Saturn's *Clockwork Knight* in terms of graphic quality. News that animation specialists Pixar had ported 3D animated movie images directly into the game's code raised hopes further.

Now *Toy Story* the game has arrived in the US, and it's clear that away from the limelight of 32-bit gaming a quiet revolution has taken place. But enough hype. The tranquillity of urban America is about to be broken because there's something nasty going on in the nursery .

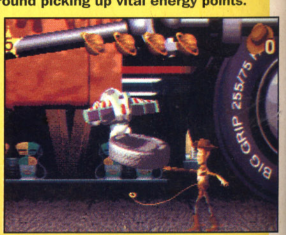


LEVEL HEADED

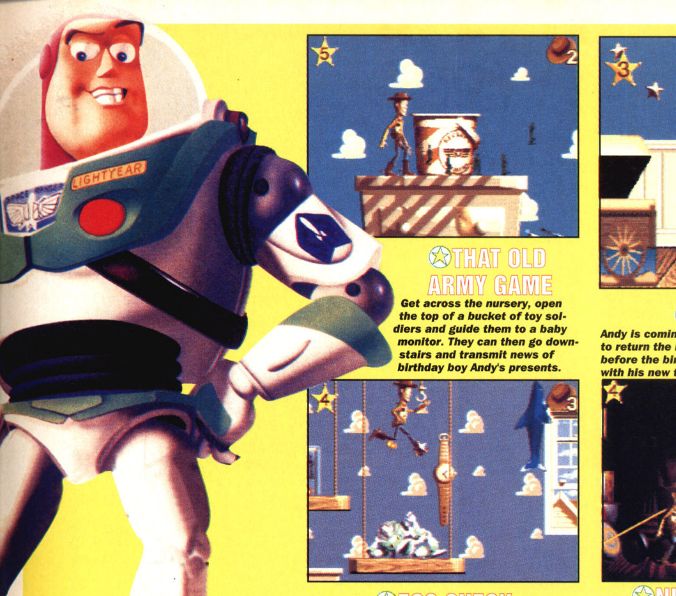
***Toy Story* features a cartridge-busting 32 megs of nursery room mayhem, in which the player directs Woody the cowboy doll, locked in a bitter struggle against Space Ranger Buzz Lightyear across 18 levels which follow the plot of the film.**

Although predominantly platformish in style, there are few strictly platform levels and a refreshing variety of different game styles. Level 5, for example, sees you racing around a table-top *Micro Machines* style in a tiny radio-controlled car. Level 16 echoes the superb *Mario Kart*, as a twisting roadway stretches before you as you race around picking up vital energy points.

Perhaps the most surprising of all the sections, however, is Level 11, curiously titled 'Really Inside the Claw Machine'. You wander around a maze of steel corridors, collecting objects and depositing them in a central area. Disney have succeeded in achieving the impossible in creating credible *Doom*-style game for the Mega Drive, a machine many detractors dismissed as being simply incapable of the feat. Although decidedly sanitised and a great deal less complex or gory than *Doom*, this is the icing on the cake of a game that displays an uncommon diversity of styles.



▲ *See if you can 'tyre' Buzz out during a scrap at the Gas Station.*



THAT OLD ARMY GAME

Get across the nursery, open the top of a bucket of toy soldiers and guide them to a baby monitor. They can then go downstairs and transmit news of birthday boy Andy's presents.

EGO CHECK

Andy's sophisticated new present, Buzz Lightyear, impresses the less sophisticated toys like Mr Potato Head. You challenge him to a flying race across the nursery.



RED ALERT!

Andy is coming back upstairs - you haven't got long to return the less agile toys to their rightful places before the birthday boy arrives back in the nursery with his new toy.



NIGHTMARE BUZZ

Feeling jealous and threatened, you dream that a huge Buzz is out to get you with his laser weapon. Use your lassoo to knock out his defences while dodging his laser beam.



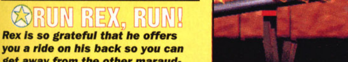
A BUZZ CLIP

Andy wants to take his new favourite, Buzz, to Pizza Planet for dinner. Out of spite you commandeer the remote controlled car around the desk, trying to knock Buzz behind it so Andy won't find him.



REVENGE OF THE TOYS

The other toys get angry with you for knocking Buzz out of the window in your fit of road rage. Rex, the Jurassic dinosaur with a complex about his tacky construction, makes a run for it. Clear his path.



RUN REX, RUN!

Rex is so grateful that he offers you a ride on his back so you can get away from the other marauding toys. Jump over obstacles like building blocks and watch out for aerial assaults from plastic soldiers.

BUZZ BATTLE

On the way to Pizza Planet, Andy's mum stops the car at a petrol station. While there, a furious Buzz reappears, dragging you off the back seat and into a scrap with a loose tyre.



▲ Disney couldn't get the rights to use Barbie in the film, so they used Bo Peep instead. Erm... oh dear.



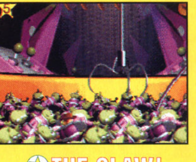
FOOD AND DRINK

Andy's mum drives off, leaving the two of you slugging it out. You both make your way to Pizza Planet and attempt to get across the restaurant. Watch out for flying Coke cans and stomping children.

INSIDE THE CLAW MACHINE

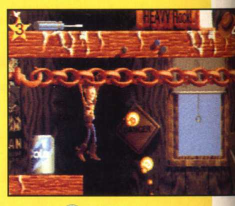
Buzz, who still doesn't realise he's a toy, spots a grabbing machine and mistakes it for a space ship that can take him home. You explore the machine's mechanism, looking for him.





THE CLAW!

You find the claw, but a snivelling delinquent called Sid has got there first. He keeps pumping quarters into the machine, trying to grab Buzz and drop him into the prize chute.



SID'S WORKBENCH

Buzz is grabbed by Sid, and you grab onto Buzz. Both prisoner's in Sid's bedroom, you escape torture by the evil brat and try to find a way out across his cluttered workbench.

REALLY INSIDE THE CLAW MACHINE

The grabbing machine's gifts, squidgy toy aliens, ask you to locate some of their friends who are lost in the machine. In return, they promise to take you to 'the claw'...

◄ Another scene from the film, in which Woody tries to convince Buzz that he's really a toy.

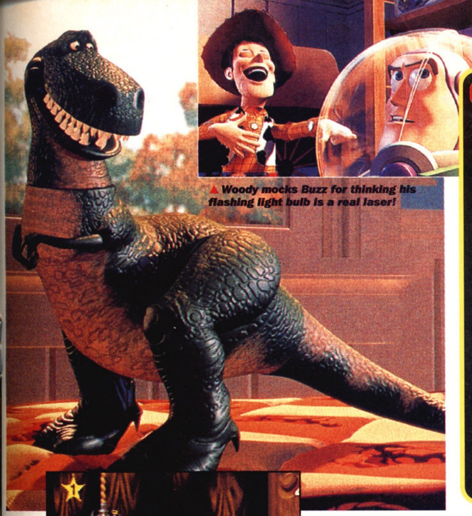
ETCH-A-SKETCH

Even the smallest detail like seemingly inconsequential intro screens are taken care of. You're briefed before each level with instructions that are flashed up on Andy's Etch A Sketch. The drawing toy also hosts a simple bonus game which you can access if you collect enough stars.

SID'S WORKBENCH

MAKE YOUR WAY ACROSS SID'S DESK BUT LOOK OUT FOR SID!

▲ Etch An Essay, for literary types.



▲ Woody mocks Buzz for thinking his flashing light bulb is a real laser!

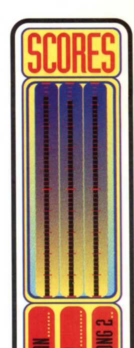
VERDICT

MEGADRIVE

Anyone writing off 16-bit hardware should take a long sobering look at this. While this still doesn't rival many Saturn/Playstation platformers, and can't quite scale the dizzy gameplay heights of *Earthworm Jim 2*, or *Diddy's Kong Quest* this remains an incredible achievement. The refreshing thing about *Toy Story* is that the surprises don't end with the graphics – rarely do you come across a game that features such a wide variety of playing styles. Mega Drive owners will be especially pleased with the eleventh level – who'd have thought that such a seemingly innocuous scenario would play host to a spin on *Doom*? Also welcome is *Toy Story*'s careful adherence to the film it's based on. This sets a standard for licensed games that leaves the likes of *Power Rangers* standing. Of course, nothing is perfect, and *Toy Story* has its faults – some of the principal character sprites are unusually large, and feel a bit 'cumbersome' as a result. Also, too many of the levels are obviously the same game dressed up in a different way – it can get a bit tedious dashing from one side of the nursery to the other for the umpteenth time. But none of these grumbles detract from the overall impression of near perfection. Take a look and surprise yourself.

MARCUS HEARN

SCORES



GRAPHICS 94
Unrivalled amongst Mega Drive games. Competition for DK2.

ANIMATION 91
Almost as impressive, and overseen by the film's animation

MUSIC 88
Instantly forgettable muzak heard on bother SNES and MD versions.

SOUND EFFECTS 90
Excellent. Topped off by a snatch of movie dialogue on level 18.

GAMEPLAY 93
Unsophisticated, but great fun. Variety keeps things lively.

VALUE 91
18 levels and a bonus game rates this high in lastability.

OVERALL
This deserves to be Mega Drive game of the year, and it's only January. For the Super NES, the game has more variety than DK2.

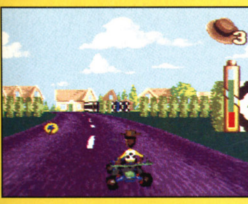
92

BATTLE OF THE MUTANT TOYS

Sid's toy collection is made up of crudely assembled remnants of toys he has long since broken. Look for Buzz in amongst this motley crew of Hasbro has-beens.

ROLLER BOB

While Sid tries to fire Buzz out of the window with a firework tied to his back, you race to the rescue on a broken skateboard/Action Man called Roller Bob. Sid's dog Scud chases you all the way.



DAY-TOY-NA

Hitching a lift on the back of a lorry, you escape from Sid's house. Feeling some loyalty towards Buzz, however, you decide to turn around and head back to pick him up in your remote controlled car.



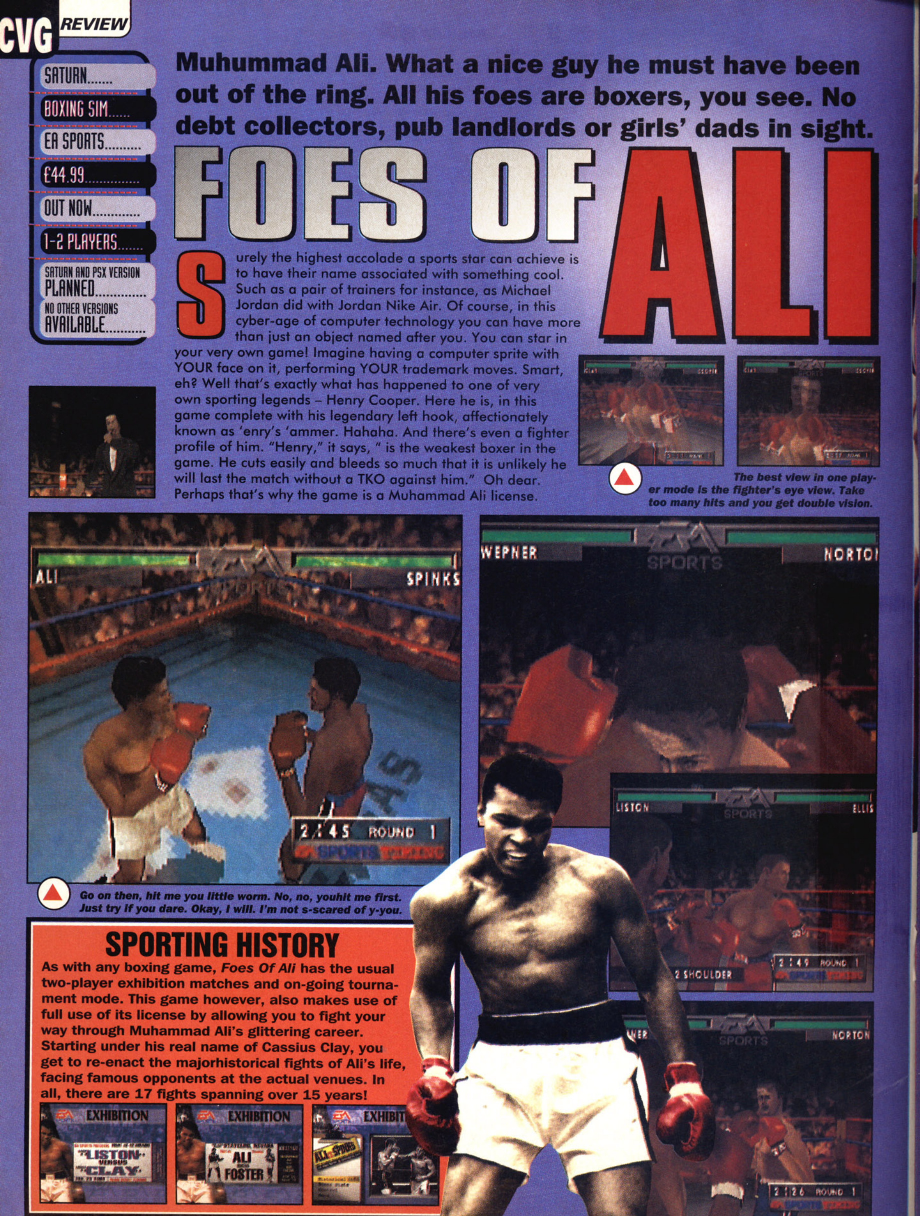
LIGHT MY FIRE

Reunited with your new friend, you remember that Andy's family are moving house. You hit the road once more, searching for the removal van and Andy's mum's car.

ROCKET MAN

You locate the vehicles, but can't keep up with them. With some speech sampled from the film. Buzz tells Woody to hang on as he launches his jet pack and flies after the van. Will they catch up?





Muhummad Ali. What a nice guy he must have been out of the ring. All his foes are boxers, you see. No debt collectors, pub landlords or girls' dads in sight.

FOES OF ALI

Surely the highest accolade a sports star can achieve is to have their name associated with something cool. Such as a pair of trainers for instance, as Michael Jordan did with Jordan Nike Air. Of course, in this cyber-age of computer technology you can have more than just an object named after you. You can star in your very own game! Imagine having a computer sprite with YOUR face on it, performing YOUR trademark moves. Smart, eh? Well that's exactly what has happened to one of very own sporting legends – Henry Cooper. Here he is, in this game complete with his legendary left hook, affectionately known as 'enry's 'ammer. Hahaha. And there's even a fighter profile of him. "Henry," it says, " is the weakest boxer in the game. He cuts easily and bleeds so much that it is unlikely he will last the match without a TKO against him." Oh dear. Perhaps that's why the game is a Muhammad Ali license.

The best view in one player mode is the fighter's eye view. Take too many hits and you get double vision.

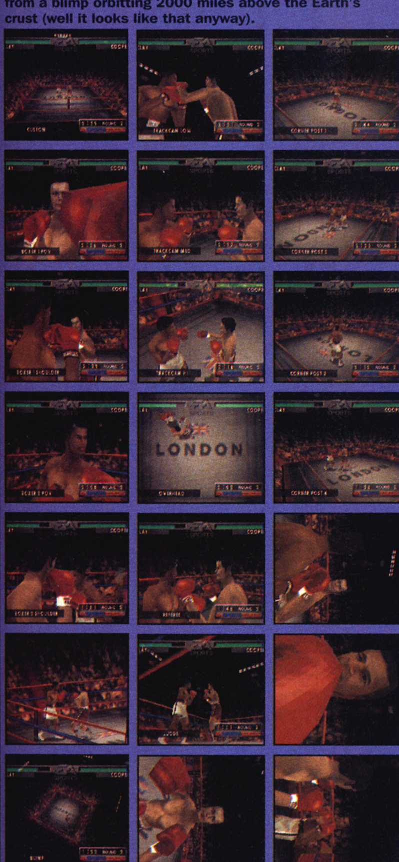
Go on then, hit me you little worm. No, no, youhit me first. Just try if you dare. Okay, I will. I'm not s-scared of y-you.

SPORTING HISTORY

As with any boxing game, *Foes Of Ali* has the usual two-player exhibition matches and on-going tournament mode. This game however, also makes use of full use of its license by allowing you to fight your way through Muhammad Ali's glittering career. Starting under his real name of Cassius Clay, you get to re-enact the majorhistorical fights of Ali's life, facing famous opponents at the actual venues. In all, there are 17 fights spanning over 15 years!

I DIDN'T SEE THAT HIT COMING!!

Didn't you? Well there's no excuse, because *Foes Of Ali* features 21 different fighting views. You can watch the action from each fighter's shoulder, from the judges seats, each corner post, 90 degree flipped and even from a blimp orbitting 2000 miles above the Earth's crust (well it looks like that anyway).

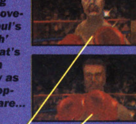






FOE OR FOE?

A game called Foes Of Ali just wouldn't be the same without some foes. Just as well then, that you get nine to face. Each one with a chilling unchanging expression, and movement similar to Paul's 'always-face-North' dance routine. What's more, in exhibition mode you can play as any of these no-hoppers. So here they are... The Foes!















HENRY COOPER
Well... he bleeds a lot and wears Brut.

SONNY LISTON
Once a lethal boxer, in this game he's way past his prime.

GEORGE CHUVALO
A brawler with the highest KO average of any other fighter in the game.

JOE FRAZIER
Perhaps Ali's toughest opponent during his glory years.

JIMMY ELLIS
A one time sparring partner for Ali. Described as a mini-version of him.

BOB FOSTER
A swift mover who relies on speed rather than strength.

KEN NORTON
This man is famous for actually breaking Ali's jaw!

CHUCK WEPNER
A dirty fighter who uses his thumbs to cut you.

LEON SPINKS
Watch this man when he goes down. He gets up harder than ever.

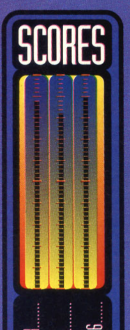
VERDICT

SATURN

Boxing is a very flashy sport and if you're into the 'big' atmosphere of watching it on TV you'll no doubt enjoy *Foes Of Ali*, because it's a very flashy game. Using the sport's most famous celebrity is a good start, but it's the in-game presentation that really shows off. The 3D graphics are mightily impressive, even if each of the fighters look like they're wearing masks made by Hannibal Lecter. And the sound, with the comedy referee and heckling crowds creates a great atmosphere. Underneath it all though, the game feels and plays not unlike the *Muhummad Ali* license on the Megadrive (also an EA game). I thought that was a good, but not great, game and the same applies here. The problem with boxing games over beat 'em ups, is they have to be more realistic. 15 rounds of wearing down an opponent with strategically laid punches. At least that's the idea, but, as is the case here, you just end up tapping the A and B buttons repetively and rolling the D-pad around. Boxing fans will love this game for its historical authenticity, but fighting game fans may find it shallow and unabsorbing.

TOMMY 'LUMP MALLETS' GUISE

SCORES



GRAPHICS 83
Good 3D and texturing. Faces look like bad surgery though.

ANIMATION 84
Fairly decent, although a tad jerky.

MUSIC 81
Some jazzy option screen tunes.

SOUND EFFECTS .. 86
Smart punching sounds. Good crowd speech and cheering.

GAMEPLAY 80
Intelligent control layout, but tough to use effectively.

VALUE 77
There's 15 years of Ali's life to get through. That's a lot.

OVERALL ....
A flashy game that captures the spirit of boxing, but perhaps not the excitement.





PC CD-ROM......
SPACE SIM......
GAMETEK..........
£39.99...............
OUT NOW.............
ONE PLAYER........
NO OTHER VERSIONS PLANNED.............
NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE...........

Space may well be the final frontier, but has Gametek created the final, definitive space game?

BATTLE CRUISER 3000 AD

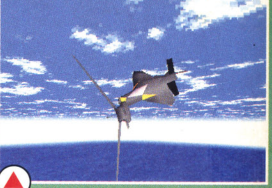




A of a pigeon hitting the windscreen, maybe.

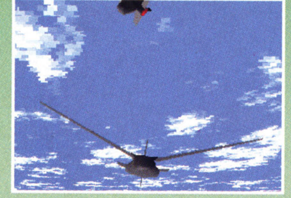


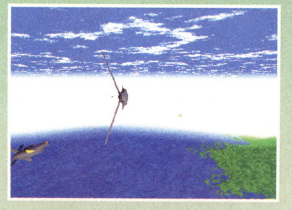
There's no doubt about it, we've had almost every kind of space action science fiction affair that you could possibly imagine. *Frontier: Elite 2* pandered for the explorers out there, offering a huge, expansive universe to travel around performing feats of valour in a small pod-like space craft. *Wing Commander III* (and of course the newly released *IV*) gave you the chance to blow the frag out of all kinds of alien beings. But there truly is nothing like *Battle Cruiser 3000AD*... no, really!
Nothing except, perhaps, Battlestar Galactica and Star Trek. And it is here that the biggest interstellar game to be released yet draws its inspiration. You see, you don't just get a piddly little vessel to take control of. This game gives you an entire space cruiser to take into battle (hence the title). Inside this cruiser, not only do you have a crew that are specialised in different tasks (a la Star Trek), but there's a bay down below containing more than a few smaller craft that you can utilise for different missions, and even take out for a spin yourself (a la Battlestar Galactica). There's no doubt about it, this game is huge and will have science fiction fans drooling over their collection of authentic tricorders.



The graphics range from merely functional to absolutely superb. All the ships in the game are rendered in 3D and you can (like any flight sim) view them from any angle you really want. This is another reason why the game took so blimmin' long to create (three years at last guess), because there's so many craft involved.

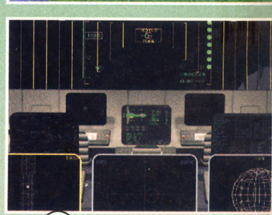






DIGIT DISTRIBUTION

One thing you'll definitely need to get the most out of *BC3000AD* is widely spread fingers. Almost everything has a function key, and the manual has pages and pages of key commands. Fortunately only a few of them are essential to learn, so as you progress through the game, you become more adept, without your journey hampered by the lack of what key to press to zap that pesky alien.

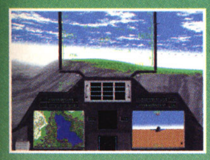
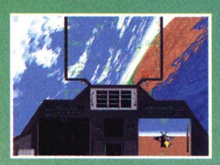


Here's your battlecruiser bridge. To the untrained eye it might look confusing. To the expert though, it's like a walk in the park.

MEN ON A MISSION

One of the truly brilliant features that gels this whole game together is the mission structure, and more importantly, the variety in playability of each. For instance, one mission might send you to save a space station that's orbiting Uranus (fnar) from attack by aliens beings. This requires you to warp your entire battle cruiser to the location, and then deploy the attack craft you have in the hull – even fly one of them yourself if you so wish. Another mission may ask for you to pick up some stranded blokes and blokesses that are stranded on a remote planet in a different galaxy, and you have to send a shuttle craft down to the planet containing jetpack chaps.

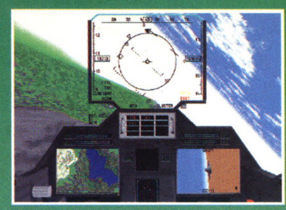


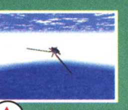



INTELLIGENT? ME?

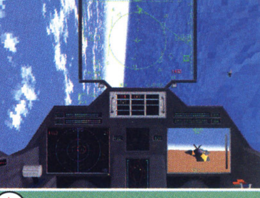
Battle Cruiser 3000AD offers something that no other space games have managed yet to acheive: Artificial intelligence. Each crew member (who you never get to see, but they are there somewhere) has a range of skills, and a different job. Some may be pilots, some may be science officers, and some may be on toilet cleaning duty (probably). You can either just trust them to get on with their jobs (or jobbies in the latter case) while you just sit back in your leatherette commander's chair, or you can bark orders at them until they eventually go on strike and chuck you out the garbage flue. Each of them has a range of skill levels and, just like yourself, they get better the more missions you go on. It makes for a far more campaign-style feel to the game.



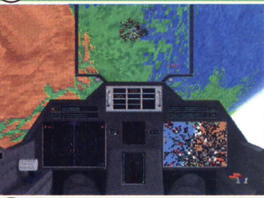





So where's Space then? Where is it?



Straighten up, you fool. My tea's spilling!



Now look! The ashtray's spilt all over the visual sensory opticromaticrom!

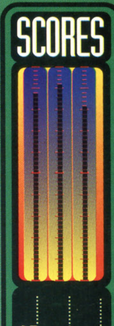
VERDICT

PC CD-ROM

To be completely honest I was never a great fan of *Frontier: Elite 2*. It was far too complicated in terms of playing area (the universe is a big place), and the play was a tad limited. *Battle Cruiser 3000AD*, on the other hand, offers far more structure in its play. The chance to be a captain of a huge interstellar ship, with other smaller craft at your command is too good to be true. But then, that'd just be bobbins if the whole thing was put together badly. *BC3000AD* is certainly not thrown together, quite the opposite. The mission layout is the perfect way to actually absorb you into the game immediately, and it teaches you how to play as you progress through the various difficulty levels. Then there's the artificial intelligence of your crew. The fact that you can either sit in the cockpit of a tiny craft, or just rely on the computer skills of your best pilots truly means that no game will ever be the same. I'm a great fan of this latest space sim. I'll even go on record in saying that this is the best on the market

RIK HENDERSON

SCORES



GRAPHICS 82
Two modes, with SVGA being the best, obviously.

ANIMATION 75
Functional. Doesn't need to be any better.

MUSIC 80
Sparse, but of a high quality.

SOUND EFFECTS 87
In space nobody can hear your thrusters.

GAMEPLAY 89
Billions of missions (or close). Plenty of options.

VALUE 89
You'll play it for a long time (but not until 3000AD).

OVERALL
Interested in a space simulation, sir? Well this is the best money can buy.



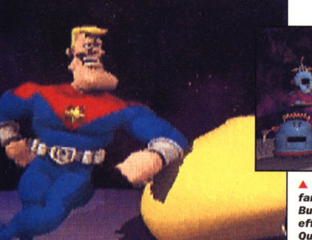
- 3DO
- EXPLOSIVE
- CYCLONE STUDIOS
- £49.99
- OUT MARCH
- 1-2 PLAYERS
- NO OTHER VERSIONS PLANNED
- NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE

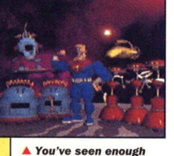
CAPTAIN Q

"Goodwill flowed from one end of the Cosmos to another. But then things changed..."

3DO Citizen of Earth, prepare for embarkation on the time of your life! Captain Quazar is here, and he's volunteered to show you how saving the universe should be done. None of your sidling stealthily down passageways, hiding round corners, and milling about in sewers. No waiting for the enemy to stumble into view. Nah! Quazar – "Man of the hour, Knight in armour with awesome power" – is taking the fight right to 'em – the Galaxy's scum that is.
Because that's what only he does best.

Look, this game isn't complicated. The Earth is under threat from a syndicate of intergalactic outlaws, with designs on terrorising the universe. Round about now General Doobah Zapphedi and his band of cosmic crims are approaching our cosy starlit corner of the void. Somebody's got to meet with him face to face, and only Quazar's got a chin big enough to take all that Doobah's got to throw at it. (The only other candidate is busy editing Britain's brightest video games magazine...)





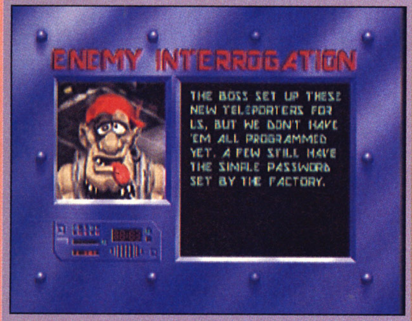
▲ *You've seen enough fancy intros, no doubt. But the tongue-in-cheek effort which heralds Quazar is hilarious.*



▲ *Open all the windows! Let the whole street know what you're playing!*

COME ON FEEL THE NOISE!!!

First striking thing about *Captain Quazar* is that it is TOTALLY NOISY!!! Which might not seem all that important in any other game, but it really is an integral part of the whole *Quazar* experience. Mainly because the Captain's key role in everything for this game is the total, and complete annihilation of anything and everything. Hence that tank-sized Pulse Cannon he is seen toting around. More on that in a while. Aside from the party-time pyrotechnics display, the manic action is supported by space-age Country and Western *Rack n Rawl*. Not to everybody's taste – but when played at the volume you're sure to crank this thing up to, YOU'LL ABSOLUTELY LOVE IT!



GET OUT OF MY W...HEY CHEERS BUD!

So you get the idea that Quazar doesn't have to be too careful about where he's treading. But while he's running around blowing things up, it's an idea to keep one eye open for any of Doobah's scum who might have surrendered. Stumble into them, and they tearfully divulge some useful piece of information that is crucial to Quazar's ultimate victory.



◀ *With a flame thrower, Quazar sets to work on torching the toxic waste.*

UAZAR

VERDICT

3DO

Anyone who gets a buzz from watching the great action movies – Terminator, Die Hard, Lethal Weapon, and so on – is sure to get a kick from *Captain Quazar*. The overall impression is second only to Midway's *Total Carnage* coin-op for explosive mayhem. And Cyclone Studio's artists have created the perfect goon to be at the centre of it all, in Captain Quazar. Yes, he is meant to look that stupid. The control could do with some improvement, as it's hard to get Quazar pointing in the right direction at times. However this is easily overlooked when the bigger, exciting picture is taken into account. Running around, trashing everything is a rare thrill. In fact I can't remember a more action-packed, unabashed arcade-style blast ever appearing on 3DO. Even after all that, there are some strategic points to consider. For example Quazar can't get everywhere just by blowing stuff to pieces – he often requires a passcode or appropriate key to move on. With cool titles like this, the 3DO is sure to win over many new fans. It's got me hooked anyway.

PAUL DAVIES



▲ *Duck into this teleporter to be transported somewhere even more dangerous!*



▲ *Double the firepower, made possible with the assistance of a like-minded buffoon!*

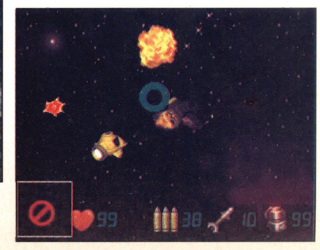


VERY PLEASED TO MEET YOU

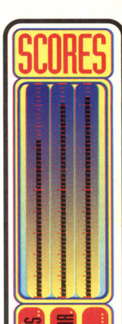
And so to the main attraction of this game: FIREPOWER. We mentioned this game was loud, and this is the reason. Aside from his Pulse Cannon, which is noisy enough, the Quazmeister is in charge of nuclear grenades (this is science fiction, remember), and atomic rockets. Deeper into Doobah's territory, Quazar gets the chance to test drive more advanced 'deterrents', that are so advanced, science hasn't given them a name yet! The Cosmic Capitan has practiced a Top Secret 360° 'Woiling Doivish' attack, that sprays the surrounding area with bullets, or rockets. But not grenades – wouldn't want to waste those.



▲ *Some of the nine missions are carried out in darkness, with only the occasional lamp post, and the flare of Quazar's gun to light the way.*



SCORES





GRAPHICS 88
Biggest explosions you'll see this side of Guy Fawkes night.

ANIMATION 86
Quazar stomps about like the goofy do-gooder he's intended to be.

MUSIC 86
Stupid but perfect. Suits the weirdo Quazar persona to a tee.

SOUND EFFECTS 92
Make sure there are no loose objects above your head before play.

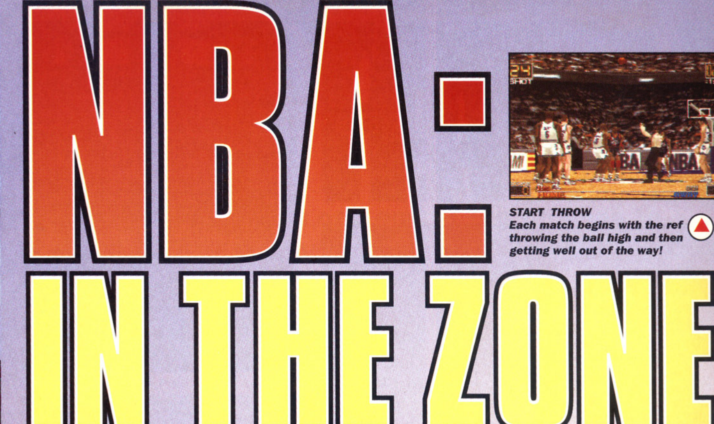
GAMEPLAY 89
So simple, any fool could pick it up. And you'd be a fool not to!

VALUE 83
Just one big blast when all's said and done. But a cool one.

OVERALL
The most fun the 3DO has had in at least a year. Polish those teeth and prepare to wear a huge cheesy smile!

87

PLAYSTATION
SPORTS SIMULATION
KONAMI
£TBA
OUT MARCH
1-8 PLAYERS
PSX AND SATURN VERSION PLANNED
NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE



NBA: IN THE ZONE

START THROW
Each match begins with the ref throwing the ball high and then getting well out of the way!

Konami blow raspberries at Sony, and decide that it's time to show how REAL basketball simulations should be done. Pass the pad, would you?

If there's one interest group that's been more than catered for as far as existing releases go, it must be the sports fan. We've had footy games by the bagful, a gaggle of golf games (and no, I've no idea what the correct collective noun for golf games on the PlayStation is!) and even weird offerings such as in-line skating and ice-cream van racing. And what's the flavour of the month for January? Basketball.

We've already got Sony's own *Total NBA* floating around, but where this looks to rely more on stunning visuals, Konami reckon they'll come out of the fight on the winning side, with *NBA In The Zone* boasting smoother play, more flowing graphics, and more instantly instinctive controls. All of your favourite NBA teams are included in the game (providing you like NBA teams) and each individual player is quite distinctive; not only by appearance, but from the wealth of statistics and history for each person.

Controls during the game are supremely simple, with the 'shoot' button doubling up as the dramatic slam dunk depending on your position. Passing is, again, incredibly simple, where one button selects between your players while another sends the ball on its merry way. When defending, the player select works in an identical way, while the other buttons swap to steals and block jumps. There are three camera views to watch from — a side-view, an end-view (as in *Give 'N' Go*) and an isometric-ish view — with each giving a slightly-different-yet-just-as-useful position to see the game from. There are also a variety of options to play with, allowing for knockout competitions, individual exhibition matches, and larger tournaments. Other than that, pretty much everything you'd expect to find in a basketball sim is here, so be ready for some lovely animated play, and those all-important slow-motion replays each time you or your opponent collects a swanky basket.

FOUL PLAY



I dunno! You go up for a dunk and you end up om your backside.



Not to worry. The ref saw everything, and has awarded two free penalty shots.



Pretty simple this. The 'Shoot' arrow moves back and forth above the basket, and it's all down to your reflexes.



And it's good! Mr Green has a 100% accuracy rating (i.e. this was his first free throw and it went in – not too hard!)



And here comes the second and last free throw. The opposition run in hoping for a rebound...



...but Mr Green keeps his 100% record intact. Hurrah for him!

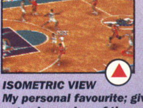
VIEW TO A DUNK

So how do you want your basketball then, mate? Sunny-side up? Upside-down? Or perhaps just a nice little isometric view is more to your liking? Well the choice is yours, because those clever folks at Konami have kept things nice and simple, and rather than confusing things with hundreds of camera angles, have but three views to choose from...



SIDE VIEW
Pretty standard fodder this, but nice and clear.

END VIEW
Just like another Konami game as we recall, but much more sexy.



ISOMETRIC VIEW
My personal favourite; giving a good overview of the proceedings, while moving in for those dramatic moments.

REPLAYS

As well as allowing you to revel in your success, the instant replay also shows your awesome dunks from a different angle. Here you can see examples of how the shot looked in the game, against the more dynamic camera angle used in the replay. Very nice indeed!









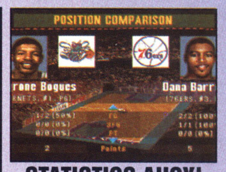
HERE COME THE BOYS!

There are tons of teams to chose from in NBA In The Zone, so have a good look around before picking the one you want. You can check out the team members in a fair amount of depth, even calling up their previous career histories.



Midwest Division
MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES
Doug West
Isaiah Rider
Tom Gugliotta
Christian Laettner
Sean Rooks
: Decide. : Return.



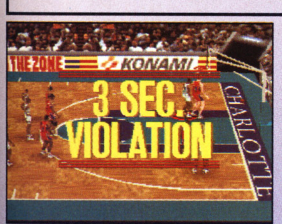


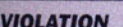
STATISTICS AHOY!

After each quarter you are presented with a number of statistics, allowing you to evaluate how effective your style of play is.

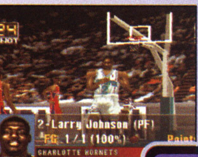








VIOLATION
All the usual basketball rules are in effect here, so don't take too much time thinking about your next move.



AFTER SHOT CELEBRATE
After each successful basket, the scoring player celebrates for a moment while you're shown their game statistics.









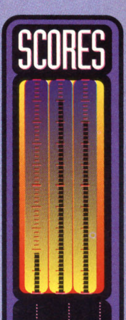
Each of the many teams have not only their own distinctive kit, but their own home court – complete with team colours.

VERDICT

PLAYSTATION

It's very hard to fault *NBA In The Zone*, simply because it does pretty much everything you'd expect a basketball game to do. Unfortunately, no matter how clever the simulation itself has been programmed, you can't help but notice that basketball just isn't a particularly thrilling game to play on a computer. Having two-players obviously helps things along, but once you've seen all the various slam animations, and got your hands round the controls, there's very little to keep you playing unless you have a great love for the game. Still, an excellent game to be sure, and the best b'ball romp available.

MATT



GRAPHICS 91
The players have textured faces of the real NBA stars.

ANIMATION 90
Smooth moving, but the characters are a tad rigid.

MUSIC 83
Nothing remarkable, but it's not unpleasant either.

SOUND EFFECTS 84
Atmospheric crowd sounds, ball bounces and silly speech.

GAMEPLAY 86
Plenty of ball-controlling and dunking moves to master.

VALUE 80
Multi-player game are where it's at, boyee!

OVERALL
More playability and better looks than NBA Jam. Until Total NBA arrives for judgement (and perhaps even then) this is the best basketball game on PlayStation.

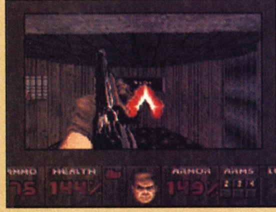
85





DOOM

There's nothing you can be told about Doom that you don't already know. What may interest you is how this new version compares to the existing versions.



This shot shows the unfortunate bug in the shotgun animation.



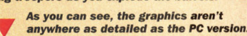


Doom is thought of by PC owners as one of the most famous and popular games of all time but, amazingly, there are still plenty of console owners who haven't ever played it. Because of this it's slowly being converted to every format – Super NES, PlayStation, Jaguar, 32X and finally 3DO. The initial attractions of the PC version were the amazing violent action and 3D graphics but interest in the game has been kept at really high levels for years now thanks to the customising possibilities – new graphics, levels, sound, etc. Though none of the console versions have yet managed to capture the same excitement as this, there have been some excellent versions, with all versions being good showcases for their respective machines.

It was the excitement that always surrounds *Doom* as well as the 3DO's powerful internals that got our hopes really high.



It's still good to hear the squelch of splitting troopers as you explode the barrels.



As you can see, the graphics aren't anywhere as detailed as the PC version.



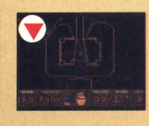
24 L-EVIL-S!

3DO *Doom* features 24 levels taken from the four *Ultimate Doom* episodes which use the more recent level layouts last seen in the PlayStation version. This means that some textures have been simplified from the PC original and some of the ceiling and floor heights have been reduced, giving the same sense of "flatness" as was felt when playing some stages of the PlayStation game.



A-Z OF HELL

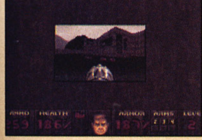
One part of *Doom* that is often neglected by players is the automap feature. This can be accessed at any time during the game and shows every part of the current level that has so far been discovered. Unfortunately, as with the PlayStation version, some of the invisible walls which are used to trigger traps are shown on the map from the beginning of a level, and clever players can use this tiny fault to work out how and when traps are going to be triggered. Never mind.

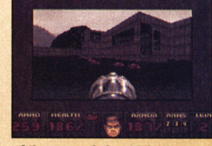






"Chugga-chugga-chugga-chugga-brwaaaaargh-aargh-ack-ack-blam-groaah!" ▲

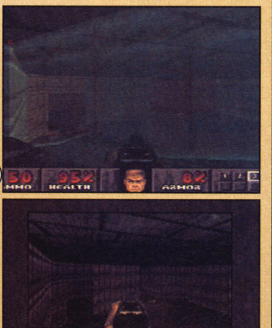




▲ If you think that the regular size of the game window (right) is wrong, there's an option to make it even smaller (left)! Fantastic!

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

With games like *Doom*, especially when there are so many different versions around, it can be worth comparing different versions. Those new to the game should be considering buying the game so here's little comparison shot comparing the two latest versions – PlayStation and 3DO.



The PlayStation version's got the different lighting effects and transluscent walls, and looks pretty lovely all-round.

The 3DO version, however, has got a very small playing window and the resolution isn't quite as high. Also, the transluscent walls are now totally missing.

BOOGIE ON DOWN

As with the 3DO version of Wolfenstein (reviewed in issue 169) the music in Doom is fantastic. As the game's on CD the music is of excellent quality though it's different to the PlayStation's moody background effects – the 3DO's got it's own little rock gig! All of the original tunes have been recorded with real instruments, mainly electric guitars with heavy distortion. Rrrrrrrokkkkk!!

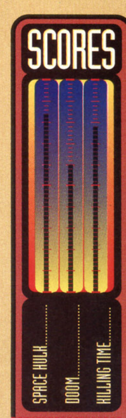
VERDICT

3DO

I still love *Doom* even after playing it all the time for well over a year and I still manage to get excited about every new version. The 3DO version didn't impress me at all right from the beginning. For a start, the game plays in a tiny window – a problem which could be overlooked if it helped the game run smoothly, but it doesn't. The frame rate is awful at best, and slows the pace right down from a fast-paced action game to a frustrating, plodding adventure. There is an option to change the screen size, but all of these screenshots have been taken of the biggest setting – and shrinking the window doesn't make the game run any smoother. It's still *Doom* – sort of – but it's such a slow and jerky translation that it doesn't feel quite like the same thing at all. A real shame.

ED LOMAS

SCORES



GRAPHICS 79
Small game window and slightly grainy but still good.

ANIMATION 67
Same old enemy animation with jerky movement.

MUSIC 90
Great new remixes of the old tunes with real instruments.

SOUND EFFECTS 85
Exactly the same as the PC version. Ie. good.

GAMEPLAY 60
The jerky graphics and slow movement ruin it totally.

VALUE 61
There are loads of better 3DO Doom style games.

OVERALL
Though it's still Doom, it's a real duffer of a conversion. Jerky graphics and a small playing window make it annoying, but still Doom. Just.

60

- SUPER NES
- ADVENTURE
- CAPCOM
- £49.99
- OUT MARCH
- 1 PLAYER
- NO OTHER VERSIONS PLANNED
- NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE

BREATH OF FIRE 2

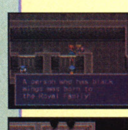
It's an RPG, and it has dragons in it. No, not Dragon Quest VI – but there's some who would argue that this is the next best thing...

Another great role-playing adventure for the Super NES. Let's just get that one thing straight, before filling you in on everything else. The UK didn't see Capcom's original *Breath of Fire* game, which is probably just as well seeing as this sequel is such a great improvement. If you've played Square's *Mystic Quest*, you have some idea of how the gameplay works – fairly static combat sequences, as opposed to the action oriented style of *Secret of Mana*. Also the fights are separate from the exploration sections, which involve little interaction with the scenery. If this sounds pretty grim, just remember that Enix's classic *Dragon Quest* series makes use of a similar engine – and millions of players haven't complained yet.

As always, the central character is a young boy who is about to meet with an extremely large and impressive destiny. His many battles with the minions of some unseen force bring him into contact with groups of similar fated warriors, thieves, and mystics. With the group assembled, the player's task is to solve all the mystery, and eliminate evil from this pretty vast fantasy world.

THREE STEPS TO SUCCESS

There are three ways for a hero to progress in this adventure: Fighting, Conversation, and Adventure. Each area is full of exciting potential, and requires some cool-headed noodling to find success:





▲ *Our hero is cornered into performing a magic trick.*

Conversation

As always it's important to collar civilian you encounter to strike up conversation. Not everyone has something interesting to say, but those who do pass on invaluable knowledge. As a welcome addition, the Capcom team have ensured that the majority of exchanges are fairly humourous – even in places where you might expect the dialogue to take on a more serious tone.



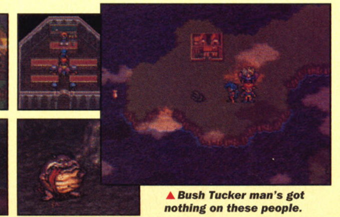


▲ *Select which order you want the party to fight in.*

Fighting

Like Square's Final Fantasy series, on which Mystic Quest is based, combat in BOF2 is handled by positioning the warring parties at opposite ends of the field – each taking turns to wear the other down. Capcom's system differs in that the action is viewed from a 3/4 viewpoint, so that the heroes can be seen performing their moves. As more enemies are defeated, the fighters' abilities develop, and their displays become more impressive as their skills increase.





▲ *Bush Tucker man's got nothing on these people.*

Adventure

Once the hero party leaves a town or city, the view switches to an extreme distance shot of the group's location – leaving them to look like giants by comparison. Key areas, such as mountains, forests, and civilisation are entered by passing over them. Enemies lurking about the place remain unseen until they challenge the group, at which point the combat sequence kicks in. So it's always wise to keep your team healthy, in preparation.

THE ADVENTURE HEATING UP

It takes a long while to get going in this game. Though it's one of the most interesting 'long whiles' this reviewer has chosen to endure. The 'action' initially takes place in the hero's home village, where we learn that he has a sister, a father, but no mother – she died in a horrific raid on their village. And the only thing which keeps Sis from loosing her mind is sleeping beneath the beak of the fallen dragon which saved the village from destruction. Question is, why did the dragon come to the rescue in the first place...? And there lies the hero's destiny.





LOOK WHAT THE KATT DRAGGED IN

As hinted through the rest of this review, players are not alone for long on this adventure. There are seven diverse, and intriguing partners who are introduced at key points in the adventure. Initially their roles are made obvious, but from then on it's down to the player to discern exactly who is best for specific missions. They each have their own special traits, perfect for certain situations – for example Katt, and Bow (a Tiger Grrrl, and Dog Dude respectively) are great at hunting. Nina, the winged warrior, possesses tremendous magical powers. As you can imagine, there's a lot of thought involved.

VERDICT

SNES

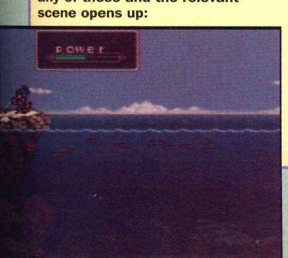
The original *Breath of Fire*, though impressive, is a cumbersome effort. But Capcom have honoured their tradition of great sequels and produced one of the finest action RPGs around. Though I find this system pretty awkward, and much prefer the *Zelda/ Mana* approach every time, the plot is full of surprises. It's one of those games where you find yourself willing to make the next sub-quest your last before bedtime, then wind up well into the next one after that before you know what's happening. Of course sensible players can always take advantage of the save-points that are, mercifully, never far away. It seems Capcom have a group of their best programmers working on this series, and the evidence is seen everywhere: from the quality of artwork, to the captivating pace of the storyline. The game also benefits from the kind of classic uplifting music heard in the Super NES *Mega Man* games – though in some areas it's a bit cheesy. With a new sub-quest set almost every 15 minutes of continuous play, there's little chance anyone's going to get bored either. Hats off to Marubeni for bringing such a class act to these shores.

PAUL DAVIES



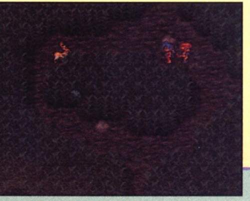
BY HOOK OR BY CROOK

As the quest becomes increasingly more tricky, chances are your team are going to find themselves out in the field, short on supplies. This could prove annoying, except Capcom have introduced a cleverly amusing feature, in which the team may fish, or hunt for larger animals such as Deer. When the opportunity arises, it presents itself in the form of either a flying fish off the coast, or a wavering bush that appears out of nowhere. Head for any of these and the relevant scene opens up:

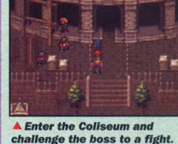




▲ *The fish aren't stupid – they know what they like. Skewer the correct bait onto the hook, or they just aren't interested. Use the A button to cast and reel in.*



▲ *Only certain members of the group are dexterous enough to capture these animals, so it's necessary to select them before entering the area.*



▲ *Enter the Coliseum and challenge the boss to a fight.*

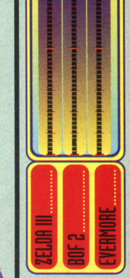


▲ *Some characters cannot equip certain items.*



▲ *Katt and yours truly prepare to rescue a friend.*

SCORES



GRAPHICS 86
Not striking at first, but the detail shines through eventually.

ANIMATION 75
Considering the sheer amount of characters, the animation is great.

MUSIC 84
Dynamic and colourful generally, but slightly naff in some places.

SOUND EFFECTS 71
Descriptive of the action. Nothing you haven't heard before.

GAMEPLAY 90
Easy-to-follow menus. Simple one-button exploration methods.

VALUE 92
A huge quest chock full of detail. Well worth the money.

OVERALL
A more fight-based RPG than usual, that should appeal to everyone: Role-playing buffs and action fans.



- 3DO
- FUTURE SPORT
- STUDIO 3DO
- £TBC
- OUT NOW
- 1-2 PLAYERS
- NO OTHER VERSIONS PLANNED
- NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE

In the future, in between episodes of Eastendroids, the most popular thing on TV is BattleSport – one of those violent games featuring flying cars.

BATTLESPORT

It's quite a popular vision of the future, this violent world where everyone enjoys watching competitors slaughter one another in the name of entertainment. Maybe film and game designers know something we don't? To play *BattleSport*, players need one high-powered futuristic Tank, one coloured ball of electric fuzz, one opponent, a goal and some guns. The idea is to pick up the ball, avoid the enemy and score a point by firing the ball into the sometimes mobile goal. To liven everything up, there are loads of bonuses available giving players extra weapons, shields, cloaking devices, flying things – just about every conceivable goodie possible. To make scoring a bit easier, simply blow your opponent up to give yourself about 3 seconds while the new challenger enters the arena.













PICK 'EM UPS

You might have come to expect a box about all of the bonuses and items available in a game of this type, but in BattleSport this just isn't a viable option. That's simply because there are far too many of them to fit on a page – we're talking 40+ here! One of the things that players should look out for is the cash bonus. These can be traded at the Equipment Store after matches for better items and Tank upgrades, making later matchups that little bit easier.



GET GOAL!

This is what you need to find in each of the 70+ stages – the goal. They're occasionally fixed in the centre of the arena, but more often than not they're found whizzing around randomly, making getting a clear shot at them while avoiding your opponent a difficult task. Even more exciting is that on some stages they're positioned in the air so that jumping shots are required.









▲ ***The two-player mode. It's too slow to be much fun.***

VERDICT

3DO

As is expected of 3DO games these days, *BattleSport* sets the scene really well with an excellent intro sequence. As the first match starts, you really feel like you're competing in a televised sport, but that sadly all goes down the drain after a bit of play. The whole game's spent chasing after the little ball while being hit from the side by the computer opponent, knocking you all over the place. With some practice the controls can be mastered but it doesn't really help the game much as it becomes boring very quickly. The novelty of the game is playing to try out all of the bonuses and upgrades, but even they can't save it from being dull. The two player mode helps to increase interest by being the best way to play the game by far, but again it doesn't last very long. The graphics and sound are good, but it's just the lack of excitement and the excess of frustration that ruin it. With the recent 3DO releases there are loads of better games you could get.

ED LOMAS



SCORES

GRAPHICS	76
ANIMATION	82
MUSIC	76
SOUND EFFECTS	83
GAMEPLAY	58
VALUE	42
OVERALL	54

3DO
STRATEGY
STUDIO 3DO
£TBA
OUT NOW
1-2 PLAYERS
SATURN VERSION PLANNED
NO OTHER VERSIONS AVAILABLE

RETURN FIRE: MAPS O' DEATH

What is the price of war? Well, you can get over a hundred for the price of one CD, guv'nor.

Return Fire is one of the best games available for the 3DO system and has got one of the best two player modes of any game. Because of its popularity, the *Maps O' Death* upgrade has been released, featuring over 100 new levels on which to play. The basic level design's the same, but as there are quite a lot of new 3DO owners who may not have got the game yet here's a brief run-down of how it's played.
Players start in their underground bunker with a choice of vehicles: Tank, Helicopter, Jeep and ASV (Armoured Support Vehicle). Once one is selected, the player leaves the relative safety of their bunker and goes in search of the enemy flag tower. Once discovered and destroyed, the enemy flag is revealed. The jeep is then used to collect the prized flag which is then taken back to the bunker to complete the stage. It really is that simple. Apart from the hordes of enemies trying to stop you. And the "dummy" empty flag towers. And the different terrains. And the other player defending their flag while trying to collect yours in the two player battle. It's all of this action as well as the great 3D effect and constant destruction that make the game so popular.

SHOWROOM

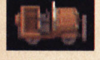
There are four vehicles which are used to complete each mission and they vary wildly in terms of weapons and special uses.

HELICOPTER
This flies, obviously, so it's got the ability to get across stretches of water. It can fire either straight ahead or downwards so it can be used in nearly every situation.

ASV
The ASV is very slow but well armoured. It can fire powerful missiles, making it good for taking out buildings and it can also lay mines as traps for other players.

TANK
The tank can get up a fair bit of speed when on the open road and is useful for attacks as the moveable turret can be aimed in any direction.

JEEP
The jeep is fast and is the only vehicle which can collect the flag. It can still attack and inflate its tyres to get across water.





▲ ***Tom Cox speaks: "I choose tank 'cos I like tanks." Who says designers are thick?***



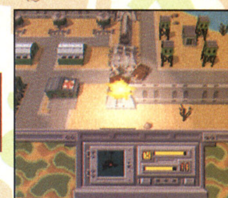


MORE LEVELS!!!

It's worth us pointing out that *Maps O' Death* isn't actually a stand alone game as it requires the original *Return Fire* CD for it to work. The levels are all very similar in style to those in *Return Fire* but have all-new layouts – giving experienced players a chance to challenge themselves more and give two player fans more areas in which to do battle.



▲ ***Some of the one player levels are mega-complex.***



▲ ***Bladda ack ack oof bang aargh.***



▲ ***Private Guise loses another tank.***



▲ ***Frantic action as both players meet.***

VERDICT

3DO

I didn't get into *Return Fire* when it first came out, to be honest, but after a bit of play I saw exactly what the fuss that 3DO owners were creating was all about. The game has got strategy, fun and destruction in just the right measures and the good graphics and sound as well as the excellent competitive two-player mode all work perfectly to create one of the 3DO's best games. The problem here is that we're reviewing *Maps O' Death* – the extra level upgrade – not the actual game. The result is that if you've not got *Return Fire* yet, you should get it soon, as it's one of the best games ever. If you have got the game and you're a big fan who's finished all of the levels then this is the perfect thing to keep you playing. If you've got *Return Fire* and you're not too keen on it, this won't change your mind as it really is just "more of the same".

FIELD MARSHALL E. LOMAS ESQ.

SCORES



GRAPHICS	91
ANIMATION	89
MUSIC	95
SOUND EFFECTS	90
GAMEPLAY	94
VALUE	75
OVERALL	80










STREET FIGHTER ZERO

Developed by: ....CAPCOM
Released by: ....VIRGIN
Out.........................April '96

100% complete

PC version planned
Arcade version available

SATURN/ PLAYSTATION

STREET FIGHTER ZERO

Contain yourself! CON-TAIN YOUR-SELF! In just one month, the greatest *Street Fighter* ever comes to your house. Better put the kettle on.

What has gone before: "Hey! Capcom are doing *Street Fighter Legends* for the PlayStation! It's gonna have all the *Street Fighters*, all on one disk. And it's gonna have an all new *Street Fighter* game on it as well, with new characters! It's gonna be BRILLIANT!!!"
What is now: "I can't believe it! *Street Fighter Zero* on Saturn and PlayStation! It's just INCREDIBLE!!!"

Oh yes. We've been excited about *Street Fighter Zero*, even before we knew what it was. And no matter how fantastic we'd built the thing up to be in our heads, it's better than expected. Ask anybody who's followed the series since 1991, and they'll tell you the same thing. So, "HOORAY!" A million times over. Go tell it on the mountain. But first CVG is gonna tell right here.

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE

Believe us when we say we've considered eliminating *Street Fighter* stories from the magazine. Perhaps some of you reading this are wishing we had – a long time ago! "Surely there's only so much you can say about a certain style of fighting game?", we asked ourselves. But the fact is *Street Fighter* is here to stay. So you've just got to live with it. That millions of fans the world over would rather do nothing else is partly the reason why CVG feels duty bound to maintain the highest possible standard of *SF* coverage around. The other part is because we love it too. Still.
For the benefit of our readers who really would like to know what all the fuss is about – AGAIN – just let your eyes wander over the next six pages. Guaranteed you're going to want this game so badly, your teeth are going to hurt.



NB: Street Fighter Zero is the Japanese title of this game, and the version that CVG used to present this feature. Virgin are releasing the game with the Western title of Street Fighter Alpha, as it is more commonly known in this country. We wanted to draw a distinction, in case the UK version runs slower and/ or is missing some of the features mentioned.

SUPER STRENGTH ONE: STREET FIGHTER ZERO

COMBO NATION

Supposing you're one of those people who closed their eyes to the *Street Fighter* phenomenon after you bought SFII for your Super NES or Mega Drive. Bet you think nothing's changed, eh? WRONG! Take a look at what you've been missing:

BEST OF THE BEST

While most other 2D fighting games seem to have been developed with a compass and ruler in mind, Zero maintains the same perfect fluidity that has characterised the series since the beginning. Poetry in motion, that has never been bettered, nor equalled. Of course we're not discounting the SNK brigade here, but let's all be men about this: *Street Fighter Zero* totally annihilates *King of Fighters '95*. And if *Real Bout* is the best SNK can muster of late, Capcom must be chortling all the way down to their R&D department.

STREET FIGHTER II

February 1991

The excitement surrounding the original part two of the series was in no small way due to the stunning character artwork. Once players had seen this game in action for the first time, it became essential to get to know how to make them perform. Tricks such as the perfect timing of Chun Li's Spinning Bird Kick to pass through a projectile, and the reeling off of Dragon Punches in the blink of an eye introduced players to a fast-paced world of gaming like no other.

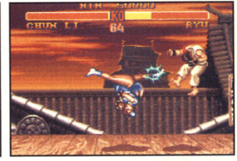




STREET FIGHTER II: CHAMPION EDITION

April 1992

Most significant about CE is that Capcom opened up the Boss characters for player control, and allowed players to pick the same fighterThe company also demonstrated how important it was for them to listen to their fans, and tightened up many of the World Warriors' moves so that the competition was more balanced. Artwork was refined too: Ryu earned himself a goatee, while Blanka looked just about ready to eat you alive! Lucky for him he no longer lost half his energy when hit during a Roll.





STREET FIGHTER II TURBO: HYPER FIGHTING

November 1992

In '92, 'Bootleg' versions of CE appeared, running at three times the speed, adapting fireballs to work like guided missiles, and super slow projectiles to create big problems for the other player. Capcom produced Hyper Fighting to harness this craziness into something with their stamp of quality: Ken and Ryu perform Hurricane Kicks in the air. Chun Li uses fireballs. Honda and Blanka have vertical charge attacks, in addition to horizontal. Dhalsim can also teleport – no bootlegger had thought of that!





SUPER STREET FIGHTER II

October 1993

Four unique new characters are introduced to the tournament! And CPS2 technology provides the ability to link up to four machines for a Tournament Battle. Capcom refined the original 12 fighters, coming down harsh on Chun Li's irritating fireball, and Guile's indefatigable strength. Ryu shocked everyone with a Red Hadoken, while Ken inspired another 12 solid months of SF fanatism with his Flaming Dragon Punch. Zangief rewarded his fans with an all new 360° technique called the Siberian Suplex.





SUPER STREET FIGHTER II TURBO

February 1994

Punters experienced the results of the Super Combo Meter for the first time: blinding flashes of light to accompany a bout finished with a Super Special (the more complicated variations of special techniques). Plus, Super Turbo is the toughest of the series – ask anyone. Gouki (aka Akuma) also features as a secret character. For over a year, this seemed like the ultimate Street Fighter. Until...













SUPER STRENGTH TWO:

ALL NEW GAME ENGINE TO EXPLOIT





STREET FIGHTER ZERO

August 1995

Little more than six months ago, Capcom left the *Street Fighter II* series at its peak and took us all back in time. *Zero* incorporates characters from Capcom's best-loved fighting games over the years. Before we talk about the adjustments made to favourites Ryu, Ken, Chun Li and associates, here are the 'newcomers':

ADON

In *Street Fighter*, Adon was the second to last Boss – before meeting Sagat. In *Zero* he has a super fast, flying kick similar to Vega's off-the-wall attack in Super; a move that is Sagat's previous Tiger Knee almost exactly (Sagat now performs this move using a Dragon Punch technique); and a somersault kick, which strikes from a distance. He's fast, so his Super Combos are hard to escape.









ROSE

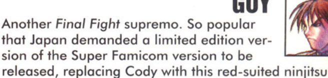
We don't expect you to recognise Rose at all as she's completely new. Her mysterious image is explained by the fact that she is a sourceress of sorts, though her uncanny Soul Energy is directed for the benefit of good. In fact she is on a mission to banish all evil from the planet – starting right here at CVG.







GUY



Another *Final Fight* supremo. So popular that Japan demanded a limited edition version of the Super Famicom version to be released, replacing Cody with this red-suited ninjitsu pro. Imagine how excited that market is now, with Guy's reportoire extended to meet the full *SF* requirements! Guy's special attacks are adaptable to change in the blink of an eye.









RYU

Apart from his young looks, Ryu is largely unchanged from Super SF Turbo. Has a new Hurricane Super though (below).

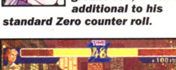


Ryu's 'Shinku Tatsumaki Sempuu Kyaku' (Vacuum Hurricane Kick).

KEN



Players can make tactical use of Ken's ground roll, which is additional to his standard Zero counter roll.





Ken has a Dragon Punch which climbs vertically, not at an arc.

CHUN LI



She has lost her Spinning Bird Kick, but in its place is a useful axe kick. Sports cool new trainers too.



China's future champion can string three super combos together.



SAGAT

Scarier than ever – especially his chest scar which glows before each round. Look out for his Tiger Genocide!!!



Mighty Sagat scores five hits just one Super Tiger Shot!









SODOM

Players starved of opportunities to impress with their Zangief skills are more than catered for with Sodom. Two of his special moves require spinning the stick – or cross key – through 360° to perform. His Super Combo requires you to spin it TWICE! Sodom starred in *Final Fight* as one of Mad Gear's cronies. In that game he used swords instead of the Sai you see him with here.



NASH (AKA CHARLIE)



It's kind of grim fighting as this character, who is destined to die at the hands of M Bison. He is, of course, Colonel Guile's army buddy and therefore shares a lot of similar techniques with the *SFII* maestro. He sports a similarly wild hairstyle too! Players familiar with Guile are sure to fair well with Charlie – back-hander/ Sonic Boom etc.







BIRDIE



Another *Street Fighter* veteran, who plays like a mix between boxer Balrog (aka M Bison in Japan), and Zangief. He's a flashy character, who's great to taunt the opposition with, though hes surprisingly unpopular with the arcade crowd. Maybe now that Zero is coming home, players will want to spend more time with this no-good street punk.





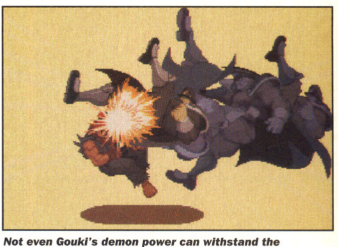




SUPER STRENGTH THREE:

ARCADE PERFECT – INCLUDING INCREDIBLE SECRETS!

You may already know who the extra three playable fighters are in Zero, but you may still be surprised to learn that they are present in the PlayStation and Saturn versions too. This goes to complete how faithful this conversion job really is. Just as we did with *X-Men* last month, in next issue's spectacular review coverage we'll tell you exactly how to get these fellers up and at 'em on console. The cheats are different to the arcade, see. Meantime, feast your eyes on these all-action screen-shots!



Not even Gouki's demon power can withstand the onslaught of Vega's Super Scissor Kick combo.



GOUKI

(AKA AKUMA)

He doesn't perform so many tricks as he does in X-Men, but Gouki is more at home in *Zero*. He has an outragoues Super Combo which steals 3/4 of a fighter's energy. He is the master.





VEGA

(AKA M BISON)

And Sagat thought he was running the show this time around! Can you believe how awesome the General appears in *Zero*! Like Gouki, his specials are cataclysmic! He deserves to die.









DAN

(AKA DAN)

Dan is seeking revenge on Sagat, for murdering his father. He fights using a mix of Muay Thai and Karate techniques. His father trained with Sagat and Gouken (Ken and Ryu's Sensei)





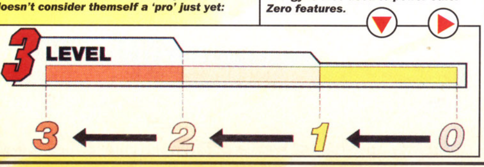


ZERO TACTICS

So to the additional moves, and tactics unique to Street Fighter Zero. There's loads more we could mention abou them, but not in the space we have here. Look forward to that level of info in the review coverage next month. Meanwhile here's a taster for anyone who doesn't consider themself a 'pro' just yet:

SUPER COMBO METER

Whenever a special move is performed, or a hit connects, the meter gains some energy. It is stored in three levels, and Super Moves require at least one to perform. This energy is also used to power other Zero features.



SUPER MOVES

You saw them first in Super SFII Turbo X. Now it's possible to store three in reserve, for use in three grades of power (press one, two, or three buttons together), or chained together by some of the fighters – Chun Li for example.



A Shinkuu Hadoken sears toward Ken, and his vulnerable back-side! Lucky his timing with this Dragon is so good.







TWO-ON-ONE OUTRAGEOUS COMBO POTENTIAL!!!

Imagine taking part in a combo scoring 40+ hits, and planting every last one of those bruises on Vega's grotesque phsyique. Well, you don't have to imagine, because this too-good-to-be-true scenario is available in *Street Fighter Zero*. In case you get chance to play the arcade game sometime soon, here's how to access the cheat: Press START for player one and player two. Keep the buttons held down, press UP twice on both joysticks then release both the START buttons. Press UP twice on both joysticks, then press player one's Jab Punch, and player two's Fierce Punch simultaneously. Home version cheat revealed next month.







The two World Warriors await the arrival of this mystery challenger – then set to work on sending him back home! Check out the cool facial expressions!

ZERO COMBO

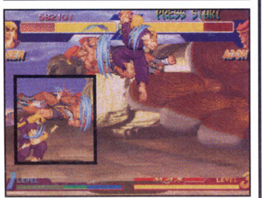
In Zero, fighters can string together impressive combos without using any special moves. Course you could achieve something similar before, but not to the same degree. This is all thanks to the button chaining introduced in Darkstalkers.



ZERO COUNTER

Requires one level of Super energy. Perform a Hurricane Kick technique, followed by a punch or kick button (depending on the fighter), and an opponent's attack is reversed. It's basically a block move that goes straight into an attack.







Exhaustive 'comparison' review in next month's CVG!

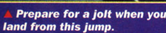
No ordinary Videodrome this month, gamestrels. Manx TT and Fighting Vipers have arrived and we've played them both. Just when Saturn owners thought they had the best coin-op games around, the rules went and changed...

VIDEO

MANX TT

It's here! AM3 have finally unveiled the much-vaunted arcade follow-up to last year's smash-hit, *Sega Rally*. However, if you think *Manx TT Super Bike* is just another racing game (only this time with motorcycles), you're in for the ride of your life! Let's not forget, it was Sega who invented the motorcycle arcade game way back with the original *Hang On*. At the time, its steering mechanism – an artificial bike that you controlled by leaning left and right – was revolutionary, sparking copycats ever since, and paving the way for today's obsession with extravagant coin-op cabinets of all shapes and sizes. And now AM3 have re-invented the concept with the most extravagant coin-op of all!







A RIDE IN THE COUNTRY!

If you're unfamiliar with the name, the game is actually based around the world famous Isle Of Man Tourist Trophy race – the oldest existing motorcycle road race in the World! Every summer, thousands of spectators flock to the island to watch the 900+ cc superbikes hurtle around the 37 and three-quarter mile course constructed from village streets and country roads. And that's exactly what the game replicates. Three laps around the actual TT course, racing against 17 other riders and passing through checkpoints to acquire time extensions.

Coming from the makers of *Sega Rally*, realism is obviously an essential ingredient of the game. However, AM3 went to painstaking lengths to make *Manx TT* authentic, filming the actual course and reproducing it to incredible effect using the new Model 2B technology. The results are graphics that better even those of *Sega Rally*, with amazingly convincing British countryside, coastlines and town areas surrounding the course.

YOUR CLOTHES, YOUR BOOTS AND...

Graphical briliance aside, you might think *Manx TT* sounds little different from any other racing game you've played. True enough, if you don't consider the steering mechanism. A device directly descended from the ancient *Hang On* bike, yet as innovative and original as that was in its day. As with a real motorcycle, the *Manx TT* bike actually requires that your feet don't touch the ground (resting them on pedestals) as you lean left and right. This isn't as exhausting as it sounds though, as the machine employs Sega's new AMS (Active Motion System) technology. No gravity-defying hoisting is required to shift the bike from one direction to the other. It steers weightlessly around!

Moreover, just like the tactile steering wheel of *Sega Rally, Daytona, Rave Racer* et al, the bike responds to other factors – juddering when going over cobbles, bouncing when landing after a jump and jerking sharply when coming into contact with other bikes. The back even slides out around corners. The sensation of actually riding a high-powered motorcycle is recreated to incredible effect!





MANX-NIFICENT!

There's no doubt about it, Manx TT is the most realistic racing game to date, and seriously puts Namco's already dated *Cyber Cycles* to shame. The high-speed graphics and ear-shattering sound, coupled with the amazing hydraulic bike, make it the biggest adrenalin rush available in the arcades. All the more so because up to eight-player multi-links are promised! Satisfaction is guaranteed, but be warned – excessive play will leave your hands in agony from gripping those damn handle-bars. Our tip is take a pair of motorcycle gloves with you!

TT FACT!
In 1906 the British Auto Cycle Club – tired of foreign manufacturers entering custom-built bikes into road races – decided to start their own race for touring bikes. British road law however, had a maximum speed limit of 20 mph and prevented public roads being closed off for racing. The Isle Of Man on the other hand, had its own government and no speed limit! Hence the Isle Of Man TT was born!

TT FACT!
The Isle Of Man TT has been held every year since 1907, stopping only for the two World Wars. The original bikes actually featured pedals and had to be pushed up the steeper hills.

- MANX TT SUPER BIKES
- MOTORCYCLE RACING
- £1.00 PER PLAY
- BY SEGA
- 1-8 PLAYERS



DROME



TT FOR TWO!

Manx TT features two different race tracks. The 'Easy' Seaside course allows you to get to grips with the machine, racing along a fast stretch of coastline and around some long simple curves. When you reckon you're up for the challenge, there's the extended 'Hard' TT course, which pits you against lethally tight bends, deadly chicanes and hump-back bridges.



▲ Your time has been extended!



▲ You can almost hear the badgers snuffling in the hedges.



▲ That's a Sega Saturn logo in the distance.

EXHAUST NOTE!

AM4 are the Sega R&D department that create the company's legendary coin-op cabinets (you can see their name on the Daytona coin-op speedometer dials). Manx TT's cabinet however, is their most impressive invention to date. Aside from the awesome AMS hydraulics, the machine also features an ingenious sound system. Front mouned stereo speakers convey external sounds (other bikes, impacts etc), whilst the bike's exhaust contains a powerful speaker that fires out engine noise sampled from real TT racing bikes!



▲ Feet off the floor and a chuffing exhaust. Wicked!

▲ A zebra crossing, but where's the pavement?




▲ You can smash the other riders off their bikes.

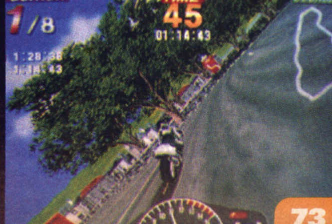


▲ I say, let's stop and scrump some apples.



TT FACT!

Although Hang On is famed as the World's first motorcycle arcade game, Sega actually invented an even earlier bike game, released only in Japan. Using handlebars to steer the action, the game was called, spookily enough, Sega Man TT Rally!



Thanks very much to Tony Markou and Zach at the Sega Park in Acton for allowing us to play the first test machine in the country!

VIDEO DROME SPECIAL

FIGHTING VIPERS

- FIGHTING VIPERS
- BEAT 'EM UP
- 50 P PER PLAY
- BY SEGA
- 1-2 PLAYERS

5/5

A prelude to another legendary hit? The latest AM2 fighting game is taking over from VF2 in Japan. Now you can play it too!

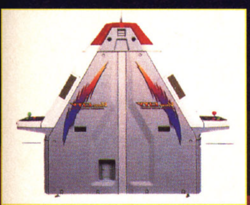
This is the start of a new arcade sensation! *Fighting Vipers*, proclaimed by Sega as their most innovative 3D fighting game ever, is now installed at arcades throughout the UK. Now you can experience it for yourself. For those of you who own a Saturn, this opportunity is all the more exciting because AM2 are already working on a conversion for your machine. As it's so new, we've only been able to put in a few hours play for the benefit of this feature. But already we have discovered the identity of the secret Final Boss – B.M. – plus we can let you into a few tricks to improve your chances.

Vipers is destined to become one of the hottest arcade games this year, so these pages mark only the start of what we hope you will find is the best coverage around. LET THE ACTION BEGIN!



"Super-dreadnought fighters are battling in the enclosed ring, blowing the opponent away!"

"Send the opponent against the enclosure at a blow!"



The so-called 'Versus City' cabinet has only one controller set-up on both sides. This allows fighters to go head to head, without revealing the challenger's identity.



AIR SPECIALS

Four of the new tactics found in *Vipers* are related to aerial action.

ON YOUR FEET

When bounced into the sky, tap all three buttons to have your Viper spin the right way for landing. Careful though, as this leaves them open to another attack on the way down. It's often better to accept the fall, holding guard on the way up.

KISS THE FLOOR

Some Vipers have 'throws' that are performed in the air. Picky slaps opponents down with his 'Air Glove'. Grace has a 'Frankensteiner' technique which is essentially ground-based tactic, but is also useful when airborne.

RHYTHM SHIFT

Some Vipers use their balance to change direction mid-jump. They also use the walls of enclosures to perform 'triangle jumps' over the head of an opponent, which works very well against the CPU in early rounds.

DAZED

Vipers become stunned for almost two seconds should they mistime a pounce. Obviously this isn't something worth practising, but it's worthwhile waiting for somebody to make the same mistake.

RUNNING ATTACKS



Only in version 2.1 of *Virtua Fighter 2* does running toward an opponent serve any use, and only then for cheap throws. *Vipers* develops this whole area to include at least six different running attacks for each fighter. The most common moves are sliding kicks, but Candy finds it more useful to slam her back-side into her enemy!

COUNTER MOVES



Reversing an attack in *VF2* is a technique used purely for defence. They're just throws used to counter somebody else's. In *Vipers*, counter moves are performed using a directional (forward or back), plus Punch or Kick. The result is that the fighter literally glows, indicating that they are temporarily invincible, then strikes back with a hard-hitting counter strike.

Some counters also double as Armour Strikes, but they take a full second to power-up so are best reserved to punish dazed Vipers.



ARMOUR ATTACK

You'll notice that the coin-op has certain moves highlighted in Red. These are the Armour Strikes – those moves which are powerful enough to smash away a Viper's protective layer. All Vipers' armour is divided between upper and lower sections. A diagram, situated at the top of the screen next to the energy bar, shows which areas are receiving the most hits. When it flashes, this means that it is ready to give, and when it finally goes, it's really impressive: Pieces fly everywhere, and the game shifts into hyper action replay mode, showing the spectacular move from multiple viewpoints. Once the action is resumed, there are pieces of armour seen littering the floor. Furthermore, a Viper whose protection has been shattered receives exactly double the damage to the vulnerable areas. Watch that energy bar just slip away!

VIDEO DROME SPECIAL

SUPER DREADNOUGHT FIGHTERS



Name: **Jane – Enthusiastic Fighter**
Age: 18
Speciality: Punch Combination

This construction worker uses her heavy punch combo to set enemies up for a damaging neck throw.



Name: **Raxel – Battle Rocker**
Age: 18
Speciality: Guitar Attack

Most impressive move we had Raxel perform is a spinning pile driver of sorts – though we can't remember how it's done!



Name: **Picky – Skateboard Fighter**
Age: 14
Speciality: Skateboard

Should've been named Tricky, as he runs rings around the slower, older Vipers – sometimes sliding beneath their legs!



Name: **Grace – Skate Queen**
Age: 19
Speciality: Leg Combination

Like Raxel, Grace also has a crazy piledriver move – called a Frankensteiner. She also has a Lion style piggy-back attack.









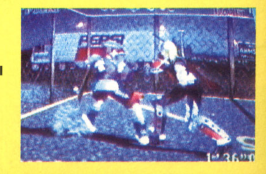
BLOW THEM AWAY!

At the end of a bout, finishing the loser with an Armour Strike blasts them clean out of the enclosure – taking the whole wall with them! Chicken-wire fences are rent apart. Concrete walls explode. Glass elevators shatter. It's outrageous! Two of the arenas are surrounded by elastic ropes – smack a Viper into one of those and they are catapulted back over your fighter's head! Furthermore some of the stages take place in high places, which means that fallen Vipers are left to plummet several storeys before hitting the ground.



CHOICE OF A NEW GENERATION?

Here's something that you might want to pass among your mates: Though the game plays identically in every country, there are subtle graphical differences between Japanese and Western *Vipers* machines. For instance Pepsi struck a deal with Sega of Japan to have their name emblazoned all over the massive truck which features in Picky's stage. Plus their logo is painted onto the flip side of Picky's expensive deck, which means players get to see it right the way through the game when using the youngest Viper. The other change is Candy. You may have noticed that we referred to her as Honey in a previous issue. That's still her name – but only in the Japanese version.



FIGHTING VIPERS

MYSTERY END BOSS – B.M. REVEALED!

His true identity is a mystery. Ain't it always the way! Whatever, he's the Mayor of Armstone City's main man in the Vipers tournament. It isn't worth his bank balance to lose. His headgear resembles a golden cobra, with the crest covering BM's face like a mask, and the tail trailing down his back. His shoulders bear golden, oversized replicas of snake's heads too. Unlike Dural in VF2, who borrows moves from all her foes, BM's repertoire is entirely his own. His moves are mostly close-in attacks: Slamming Vipers into the roof of his tower, or picking them up by the neck and throttling them. He uses running attacks to get in close, often catching challengers by surprise. By this stage, though, a Viper's reflexes ought to be super sharp in order to stop him in his tracks, or pin BM against the ropes with punches.

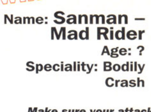
"Hard fighting begins now in a nook of a town!"











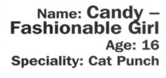
Name: **Sanman – Mad Rider**
Age: ?
Speciality: Bodily Crash

Make sure your attack doesn't fall short of Sanman, or he'll pluck you out of the air and use you like a bowling ball!



Name: **Bahn – Juvenile Gang Leader**
Age: 17
Speciality: Big Stroke

The easiest move in the game – hold forward and press punch – is also one of the most devastating. And it belongs to Bahn.



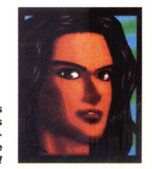
Name: **Candy – Fashionable Girl**
Age: 16
Speciality: Cat Punch

Try Sarah's PPPK technique with Candy for a hard-hitting combo which flips the opponent into the air.



Name: **Tokio – "Justice" Viper**
Age: 16
Speciality: Spin-Kick Combo

Best thing about Tokio's Spin-Kick Combo (K+GKK) is that it attacks upper, middle, and lower parts of the body!



▲ SanMan prepares to swing Candy around in the same way Wolf throws in VF2.



▲ A cool Raxel combo finishes in a spinning back kick, right to Tokio's face.



▲ Jane plummets to her doom after defeat at the hands of BM!

Virtua Fighter 2

THE GREATEST GUIDE

PART 2: LETHAL TECHNIQUES

In the last issue we gave you a complete list of moves for what is possibly the greatest game ever (call 01858 468888 to get a back issue if you missed it) and we continue the Greatest Guide this month with some beginner tactics, as well as a few more advanced techniques. We begin with a run-down of all of the currently known cheats, secrets and tricks hidden away.

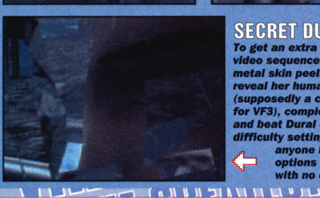




Dural's metal skin peels away to reveal the mysterious eye from VF3?







SECRET DURAL FILM

To get an extra rendered video sequence of Dural's metal skin peeling away to reveal her human innards (supposedly a character idea for VF3), complete the game and beat Dural on the Hard difficulty setting. Don't tell anyone but the options can be set up with no damage. Shhh.

COPYCAT POSES

One of the best discoveries to come out of extensive VF2 playing is that it's possible to get losing characters to copy their winning opponent's victory pose. Before doing it, make sure that you've got a time limit of any length on.



1. Hit your opponent at least once so that you've got more energy than them.



2. Have your opponent jump over you so that they're facing away, and position them so that they are on the edge of the ring, but without falling out, with your character touching them.



3. Stay in this position until the timer runs out and you'll win the round.



4. As your character moves into their victory pose, they push their opponent out of the ring, making them move into a copycat pose.

VIRTUA BIRD

The Virtua Bird is found on Jacky's stage and can be summoned from the background to hover above the losing player.



1. You must be fighting in two-player mode on Jacky's stage as any character.



2. At any time, press all six buttons on both controllers (A+B+C+X+Y+Z). If you hit them all at exactly the same time, the bird appears and hovers over the losing player.

OLD MUSIC

To get remixed music from VF1, hold these buttons just before a fight begins until the music starts.

- For Sarah's music hold R on pad 1.
- For Jacky's music hold R on pad 2.

ALTERNATE COSTUMES

To fight in your character's second colour, hold Up and press C to select your character.

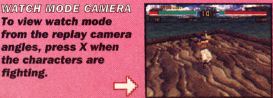






WATCH MODE CAMERA

To view watch mode from the replay camera angles, press X when the characters are fighting.





SLOW MOTION REPLAYS

To get slow replays, hold A, B and C when you win a round until the replay starts up.

OPTION+

To get the Option+ menu, complete the game in Expert mode. You can select your stage, ring size, replay length and music volume as well as fighting under water.

DURAL

To play as Dural, go to the Player Select screen and press either of these button combinations:



For silver Dural - Down, Up, Right, A+Left.
For gold Dural - Down, Up, Left, A+Right.



CHARACTERS

These tips are supposed to give players a few ideas for creating their own playing style rather than tell them exactly what to do, as that's one of the beauties of the game – everyone can have their own playing style.



EASY WIN OVER COMPUTER

There's a little problem with the artificial intellegence of Jeffry and Wolf which was in the arcade original and has been carried across to the Saturn version.
In Version 2.0, Jeffry and Wolf can be beaten by repeatedly punching as they'll just crouch and stand up into your punches.



GENERAL THROW COUNTERING

All the characters can counter any throws by pressing Guard and Punch at the same time as their opponent. Unless playing underwater, it can be very difficult to react to a throw in time to get out of it so you'll need to predict when someone's going to attempt a throw.



1. If someone misses an attack, leaving them vulnerable in the air, they'll often attempt to surprise with a throw as they land.



2. As they are falling, tap G+P repeatedly to either get them with your own throw or to counter theirs.



3. When you get out of their throw, you'll nearly always end up in an advantageous position, giving you the chance to get in a combo.

RETRACTING ATTACKS

All of the characters can can cancel attacks by pressing the Guard button straight after the attack button. This can be used to fool some players into thinking that you've committed yourself to a kick which would normally leave you open to attack, whereas you can retract it and gain the advantage.



1. Here, Jacky retracts his kick straight away, fooling Lion into blocking...



2. Leaving Jacky with the advantage and a perfect throwing chance.

SELECT VICTORY POSE

Hold A, B or C when you win a round until the pose starts to choose which of the three you want to see. There's a fourth one which can be accessed when you win with a "perfect".



(Above) Hold B.
(Below) Hold C.





To get this pose, simply hold the A button when you win a round.



AKIRA



Akira doesn't produce particularly fluid combos as not many of his moves will link smoothly. He is, in fact, the most advanced and powerful character in the game when mastered.
The most awesome secret move in the game is incredibly hard to learn, but once mastered can cause MAXIMUM embarrassment for your unfortunate opponents. The "Stun Palm Of Doom", as it's known, causes 50% damage and looks totally incredible!





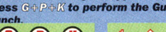




1. When close to your opponent, press G+P+K to perform the Gut Punch.

2. Immediately press B, DF+P+K (the Back Push from Behind).

3. Then press B+P to perform a two-handed push in your opponent's back. The three parts should be performed very quickly (all in under a second) and as one motion to get the incredible three-hit attack working!











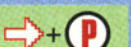

1. By using the Block Breaker first (F+G+P), your opponent will be thrown higher into the air with the next hit than usual, giving you more time for combos.

2. Then use the Jumping Straight Kick (F, F+K) to knock your opponent up into the air.

3. Before they hit the floor, use the Dashing Elbow (F, F+P) or the Power Uppercut (DF, DF+P) to catch them one more before using a pounce attack when they are down.



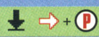



OR





Akira's Dashing Palm Strike (Hold D, F+P) is excellent for getting cheesy Ring Out victories as it knocks opponents backward a long way. If someone's on the edge of the ring, a few of those will see them out.












1. One of his more advanced Version 2.0 techniques starts in the same way, with the Block Breaker (F+G+P).

2. Then perform the Jumping Straight Kick (F, F+K) and tap Forwards to dash in close.

3. Now press Punch, then Guard straight after to retract your arm.

4. Instantly press Punch then Kick to juggle your opponent for an awesome combo.



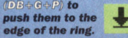





1. One slightly risky way of forcing a Ring Out is to back away to near the edge of the ring and as your opponent reaches you, use the Surprise Exchange (DB+G+P) to push them to the edge of the ring.







2. Now use the Dashing Palm or one of the juggle combos to hit your opponent backwards and out of the ring.

Akira has got the most comprehensive selection of Counterattacks in the game, as he can stop almost any attack.

1. You need to predict when an attack is coming and press Guard to block it.



2. Instantly press the direction and Punch button depending on the height of the attack to send your opponent flying.

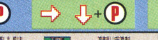
PAI

Pai's main advantage is her speed and her multiple-level kicks. These can be used to knock an opponent off balance long enough to get in extra hits. Her main disadvantage is that she doesn't really have any moves which knock opponents into the air for combos.



1. Start by throwing three punches, then tap Forward twice.
2. Immediately go into the DDT Throw (F, D+P). If your opponent blocks one of the first punches, perform a high counter (B+P) to stop them.





1. This cheesy "tactic" will probably only work once against each player as they'll soon figure out a way of stopping it. When close, hold toward your opponent and hit Kick repeatedly.
2. If the kicks are blocked, the player will stagger, leaving them open to a Flip Kick (K in close). This can easily force a Ring Out and a dead arm for you.



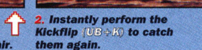

SARAH





1. Perform the Low Punch, Knee combo (F+P, K) to knock your opponent into the air.

2. Instantly perform the Kickflip (UB+K) to catch them again.



KAGE





1. Kage's best move for setting up combos is the High Toss throw (B+P).

2. When the opponent is falling, you can do the Jumping Kickflip (UB+G+K), a jumping kick, a PPPK combo or almost any other well-timed attack.

3. If you let the opponent hit the floor, they'll receive 20% damage which can be followed up by a Sweep (F, F+K) while they're on the floor for more damage.

LAU




Though Lau is an excellent beginner character, he hasn't really got many sure-fire techniques which can be used. The best way to win is using a variety of PPPK combos and throws.

Lau's PPPK combo can be improved by turning it into a juggle combo.
1. Use either the Cartwheel Kick (UF+K) or a regular late jumping kick to knock your opponent into the air.
2. Immediately go into the PPPK sequence to bounce your opponent for five hits backward across the ring.









1. Back away to the edge of the ring and lure your opponent toward you.

2. As your opponent reaches you, perform the Fireman's Carry (B+P).

3. Your opponent will fall behind you and hopefully slide out of the ring.

JEFFRY



As with Wolf, Jeffry's main strength is his throw collection, but he's also got a good variety of attacks.

This isn't actually any use when playing the game properly, but it is an interesting bug nonetheless.







1. When playing as Jeffry versus Shun, have Shun sit down (D, D) anywhere in the ring.

↓ ↓

2. Jeffry can now perform his Head Slam (DF+G+P+K) from anywhere by teleporting to Shun.

↘ + G + P + K

1. Hit your opponent with a Knee (F+K).

2. When they're in the air, hit them with the Low Elbow, Uppercut combo (F, F+P, P) or a simple crouching punch (D+P) followed by a crouching kick .



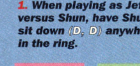




→ + K   → →+P P







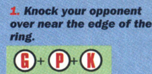






1. Knock your opponent over near the edge of the ring.

2. Perform the Bottom Butt (G+P+K) so that you land on your opponent and push them backward, out of the ring.





G + P + K

WOLF





Wolf's main advantage is his amazing throw power. By practicing the timing of them you can become almost unbeatable.

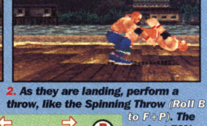




1. Block an opponent's move, especially a knee.

G

2. As they are landing, perform a throw, like the Spinning Throw (Roll B to F+P). The easiest 50% damage ever!

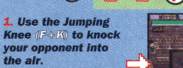


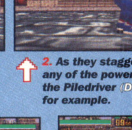
← ↙ ↓ ↘ → + P



1. Throw a standing punch to throw your opponent off guard.

P   ↘ ↘ + P





2. As they stagger, perform any of the powerful throws – the Piledriver (DF, DF+P), for example.

1. Use the Jumping Knee (F+K) to knock your opponent into the air.

2. Follow it up with a low punch (D+P) then a flip punch (F+P) to juggle them. Otherwise, use a low kick (D+K).





→ + K   ↓ + P   → + P

JACKY



Jacky is an excellent character for beginners to use as almost all of his moves are simple to perform and fairly powerful. The only problem is that the best way to play as Jacky is with a very repetitive "knock-down, pounce" system, making it easy for good players to predict and counter attacks.





1. Perform the Knee (F+K) to knock your opponent up.



2. If they are thrown high enough, catch them with the Double Roundhouse (K, K), otherwise use the Kickflip (UB+K) or the Swipe (P+K).



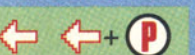
→ + K   K K   OR   ↖ + K   OR   P + K



1. Use Spinning Hook (B, B+P) when in close to hit your opponent and turn yourself around.



2. While they are reeling from the attack, perform a multi-hit combo without turning round (P, P, F+P, K) to surprise them.







← ← + P   P P P + K K

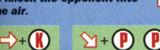
LION




Lion's biggest advantage is that he's very short and, as such, a lot of attacks miss him. Lion's lack of counter attacks is made up for by his sidestepping ability.



1. Perform the Knee (F+K) to knock the opponent into the air.

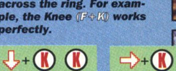




2. Use the Uppercut, Overhead Punch combo (DF+P, P), to catch them with a couple more hits.




Lion's Low Kicks (D+K, K) can be tagged onto the end of lots of moves to catch opponents in the air, bouncing them across the ring. For example, the Knee (F+K) works perfectly.

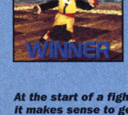




Lion's Sidestep moves (DB+G, for example) are particularly useful in Version 2.1 as they move him slightly further around the opponent than in Version 2.0.

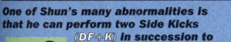
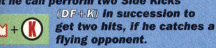


SHUN





One of Shun's many abnormalities is that he can perform two Side Kicks (DF+K) in succession to get two hits, if he catches a flying opponent.

At the start of a fight, it makes sense to get Shun to drink at least three times to increase his power and to enable his Multiple Sweeps (D+P+K, K, K).



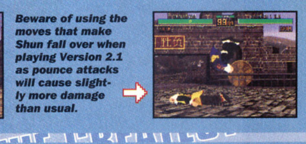



1. To get an easy but slightly risky Ring Out victory, move to the very edge of the ring and sit down (D, D).

2. If your opponent runs into you or tries to punch you out, you'll both go off the edge, but your opponent will touch the floor first.



Beware of using the moves that make Shun fall over when playing Version 2.1 as pounce attacks will cause slightly more damage than usual.



DURAL



1. Use the High Toss (B+P) and as your opponent falls, punch and retract it immediately with G.






2. Go straight into a kickflip (UB+K) to juggle your opponent.

2. Just before they land, catch them with the Back Push (B, F, F+P+K).



1. Use the High Toss (B+P) to launch your opponent into the air.

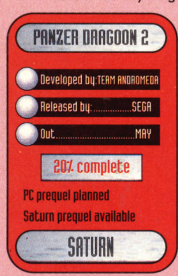


PANZER DRAGOON 2

1996 may still be a mere toddler of a year in the clock-like eyes of Chronos, Almighty God of Time, but already it's shaping into a triumphant year for the Saturn. And this gaming domination looks set to continue as Sega warm up the sequel to one of their hottest games of last year – Panzer Dragoon!

At the beginning of last year, when the Saturn and PlayStation were demonstrating their awesome capabilities with brilliant conversions of the latest coin-ops, Sega pulled a somewhat unusual title out of their hats and, for a while at least, managed to tip the 32-bit scales strongly in their favour. Whilst *Panzer Dragoon* may not have had the arcade status that's almost essential for blockbuster success, it was nonetheless one of the most amazing looking games ever seen, and still is. Taking the 3D shoot 'em up formula pioneered in *Space Harrier*, Sega added a 360 degree field of vision to create a blistering experience. But it was the fantastical visuals that made *Panzer Dragoon* so impressive. Forget that you're flying on the back of a huge dragon, wings flapping and tail snaking behind. Forget that you're cruising over oceans, deserts, forests, through canyons and subterranean catacombs. Forget that you're facing giant skyships, freight-train sized sand worms and flying reptiles that make your dragon look like a tadpole. Just take it for granted that you're on an alien world, battling against an evil empire with flying ships that harness whales for sails. The vision *Panzer Dragoon* painted was amazing!

And the sequel is all set to recreate that vision, only more so. Team Andromeda have been working on *Panzer Dragoon Zwei* since the completion of the first game, but only now has an early version been revealed. Only 20% complete, with no fixed release date, but if this taster is anything to go by, *Panzer 2* is going to be spectacular. Expect much more soon!



SON OF PANZER DRAGOON!

That would actually be a very apt title for this sequel to *Panzer Dragoon*, because the dragon you ride in the game isn't the one from original *Panzer*, but an all-new baby dragonlette. More than just a cute plot idea, the upbringing of this baby dragon is what the whole game is based around. As the game progresses, so the dragon matures, first learning how to shoot, before learning to fly. More impressive still, the dragon's growth is actually affected by the player's skill, with weak players breeding a more defensive dragon, whilst expert players find their one developing offensively. This is the programmers' way of answering complaints that players found the first game either too easy or too hard. Now the game suits the skill of the player!





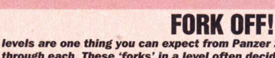








FORK OFF!



Larger levels are one thing you can expect from Panzer 2, complete with a selection of routes through each. These 'forks' in a level often decide whether you fly or gallop through it. Here we see the first fork in the game, as you come across a huge mountain. Head left and your dragon flies off a clifftop. Right leads you into an enemy ground installation.



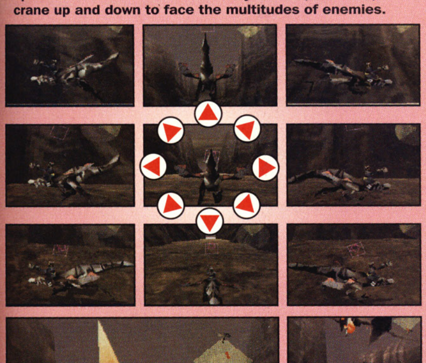


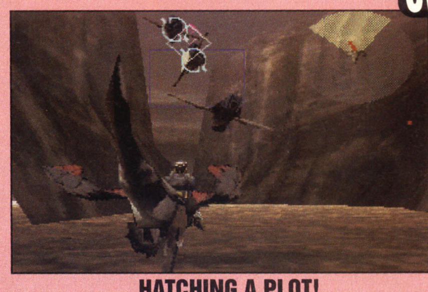




VIEW TO A KILL!

Although *Panzer Dragoon* actually set you on a fixed course through each level, an ingenious impression of freedom was created through its 360 degree swivelling view. *Panzer 2* expands on this even more by providing up and down movement too. Now you can (and must) crane up and down to face the multitudes of enemies.





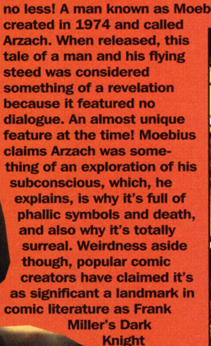
HATCHING A PLOT!

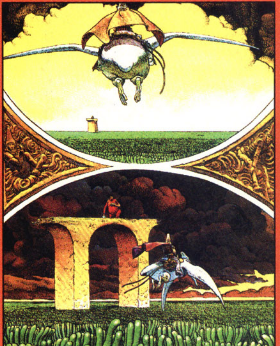
Rumour has it that the original *Panzer Dragoon* was THE most expensive game ever made. Whether you believe that or not, it was certainly an amazingly polished product, thanks in no small part to its incredible intro. *Panzer 2* also features a brilliant opening sequence. Unlike the first game though, this one doesn't kept the plot in mystery. In fact, it's tied into the first story and resolves many loose ends from it. Plus it shows your baby dragon hatching. Remember though, a dragon isn't just for Christmas, you can make sandwiches out of the left overs for weeks.



AND BEHIND ALL THIS IS... MOEBIUS!

Imagery as incredible as that in *Panzer Dragoon* isn't something you'd expect to see in a video game. Not surprising then, to find that it isn't actually the creation of a programmer's mind, but is in fact based on the work of an artist. Arguably the greatest comic-book artist in France, no less! A man known as Moebius. The actual strip the game is based on is a four-part story, created in 1974 and called Arzach. When released, this tale of a man and his flying steed was considered something of a revelation because it featured no dialogue. An almost unique feature at the time! Moebius claims Arzach was something of an exploration of his subconscious, which, he explains, is why it's full of phallic symbols and death, and also why it's totally surreal. Weirdness aside though, popular comic creators have claimed it's as significant a landmark in comic literature as Frank Miller's Dark Knight Returns!

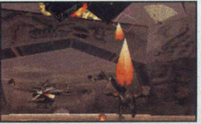




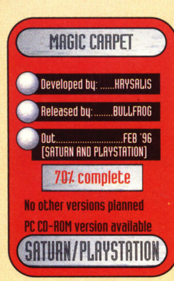












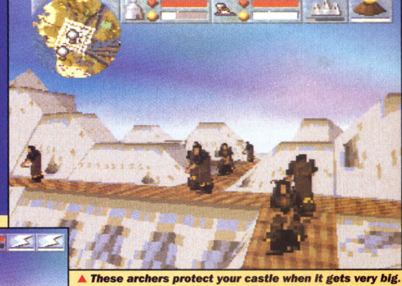
MAGIC CARPET

It features gentlemen in turbans, large mystical monsters and more playability than any other carpet-based flying extravaganza. Course it was the only one until recently, but 'hey'.

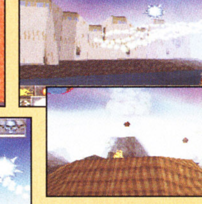
After the less than impressive *Hi-Octane*, those chappies at Bullfrog are set to reaffirm their game-designing prowess with the double format release of the PC classic s– *Magic Carpet*. Converted for the PlayStation and Saturn in-house, CVG has had an extensive playtest of both versions which resulted during which we have discovered that this really is a first-class job. Bullfrog have pulled out all the stops in order to cram in as much as they can of the PC original and, as you already know from the news printed last month, more besides.

ARABIAN FIGHTS

This conversion of the PC smash-hit places you in the role of a wizard's initiate on a quest to free the many lands from the hold of evil rivals. What this entails is the wearing of embarrassing pantaloons and riding around on an Arabian rug, shooting at anything that moves in a fireball frenzy, while at the same time collecting and converting large mana balls of energy in order to build a top-notch fighting fortress complete with a crew of loyal bowmen. No problem. Except that other, nasty robed gentlemen wish their fortresses to be full of mana as well, and this can lead to slight disagreements resulting in the trading of insults (and large amounts of spectacular magical combat).



▲ *These archers protect your castle when it gets very big.*





▲ *Your lovely mana balloon.*





FANTASY THIS AND THAT

As you progress through the many magical worlds that *Magic Carpet* has to offer, you encounter a variety of dark deadly monstrosities of increasing nastiness: Dragons, Griffins and the horrific Wyvern. No fear, because these may by destroyed by obtaining an ever-increasing amount of powerful spells. Starting with the weedy but rapid fireball, you can switch to the more powerful lightning bolt, before trying the awesome meteor strike and the frankly over-the-top volcano spells. There's nothing more hilarious than summoning a giant lump of molten mountain in the middle of you opponent's castle and watching the ensuing carnage! Yeehaaarr!! Other spells include the summoning of a huge skeletal army to trample over the land to fight pitched battles with your wizard foe, and there's even the appearance of a huge towering Genie, but the main benefits that PlayStation and Saturn owners have over their PC owning friends is the sheer number of levels, the graphical overhaul (most evident on the PlayStation version) and the jaw-droppingly smooth frame-rate. An essential purchase? We reckon!



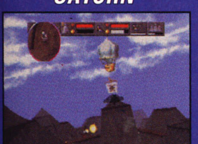
MORE FOR YOUR MANA

What cannot be fathomed from these screenshots is the sheer speed of the game (on both formats), to the extent that a Pentium 90 would have trouble matching the performance. Running in full detail, this zooms along, and only notably slows when the screen becomes impossibly congested with massive magical explosions that the game has in abundance. Another plus is the quantity of levels. If you thought PlayStation *Doom* had enough of them, prepare to invest large amounts of time completing the 75 magical lands that *Magic Carpet* has to offer – 50 normal zones and 25 ice-based worlds to plough though. This is essentially a *Magic Carpet* 'Remix', as you've got the PC expansion *'Hidden Worlds'* to try your hand at. With a password feature, you can take your time and complete the game in a pleasant sedate pace, or gibber with insanity and try to conquer it in days. Either way, you won't be finished with this title for many months!

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

The majority of screenshots that litter this preview are taken from the PlayStation version; simply because it was nearer to completion than the Sega project, but both port-overs are very, very close to each other in terms of polygon counts, speed and everything else. From our carpet-based shenanigans, we found both conversions to be first-rate, but the friendlier 3D processing power afforded by the Sony machine gave it a slight edge. Both play the same and run identically, and the only real differences are in the sky textures (just look at those pastel hues!) and the fruity extra colours used in the Sony version.

SATURN / PLAYSTATION





Well, waddya think? Darn close to each other, but notice the larverly pastel skies in the PlayStation version.





Marvellous similarities between the two versions. Look, look! They're almost exactly the same as each other! Which is which?



▲ ***The "All Seeing Eye" in the top-left corner shows our three balloons.***



▲ ***Blam! Fry those villagers! Burn their houses! Cook their heads!***

SATURN



Ah – Massed Griffin attacks on later levels can spell instant death. Run away! Run away!



The frozen worlds beckon expert gamers. Wow, just look at that polygon snow floor!

PLAYSTATION



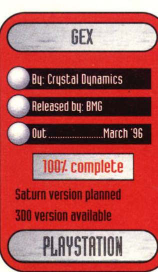
Summon the power of the ancients with a mass horde of bony folk. Then destroy them just for fun!



There he is! Over there! Nick those red jars of spells and toast him!



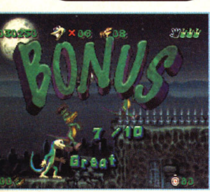
Dragons and worms. They all hold oodles of mana and must be destroyed. Take that, foul fiend!



GEX

Hey, everyone! Dana Gould did the voice overs for this one! So... who's he?

Here comes a character trying to sell itself too hard. And the fact of the matter is this is precisely the kind of thing that puts people off. Which is a shame. Because the truth of the matter is that this Gex character is pretty clever. So if he could just button it long enough for CVG to herald his arrival properly, he may just win over some new friends. Otherwise he could be headed for the food blender!



▲ *Gecko bonus action, where Gex hits skulls with his tail.*

NO STRANGER (THAN YOU)

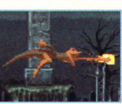
Yes, Mr 3DO, this is exactly the same *Gex* that wise-assed his way onto your system not so long ago. Exactly the same. If you just bought a Saturn or PlayStation, and you already own a 3DO and *Gex* – you don't need to read any further. Bye bye. Everyone else, keep going...

DO WE REALLY NEED THIS

Gex has Platform Character written all over his Smart-Alec grin. The fellers at Crystal Dynamics obviously awoke one day and proposed that they make a hit platform game, so they did. Smug or what. But that was on *3DO* – maybe PlayStation and Saturn players already have all the platform heroes they need? Okay, here's what the *Gex* can do. You decide.



Tongue Lash
Used to snatch items from the air – upwards, as well as sideways.



Puke
Depends on what he's eaten. Kills stuff though, it's so horrible.



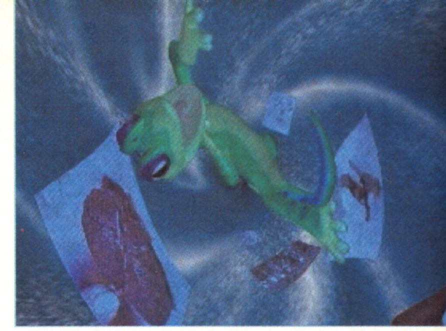
Tail Whip
Great for smacking enemies, or batting objects into enemies.



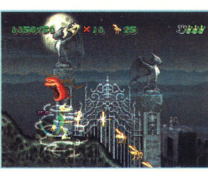
Wall Stick
His party trick. Suckered feet enables Gex to climb walls – even cling to ceilings. When he has his back to the audience, he is able to make use of a spin attack too.







▲ *Part of the freaky intro that leads players into the game. Waaaaah!*

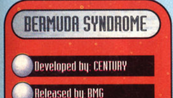




WHACKO GECKO

Gex is a platform game, pure and simple. It isn't anything original, but – as any *3DO* fan will tell you – what it does, it does with style. The storyline isn't so inspiring: couch potato gecko lizard dragged Poltergeist style into a world of TV media hell. But it's enough for Crystal Dynamics to demonstrate their superior design skills. The humour may be pitched at the 30-somethings age group, but the gameplay should appeal to everyone. Find out more about *Gex* in the review, due next month...





BERMUDA SYNDROME

Bermuda Triangles. Hmm, we like those. But not as much as Viennese Whirls – they go with your coffee better...

We know the best way to introduce *Bermuda Syndrome* would be to adopt a serious tone, and remind one and all of the mysterious goings-on that prevail around this legendary zone. But what you really ought to know – whatever the story – is how sumptuous Century's vision of their interpretation appears, and what devious puzzles they have installed for the player. To give you some idea of the quality of work gone into *Bermuda Syndrome*, it helps to know that it has been some three years in the making with a Hollywood-style production team. Some of whom are former Disney artists. Were Century just being slow, or is this the worthy successor to Delphine's *Flashback* we're all hoping for? From what we've seen, there's much to appreciate.





FLASHBACK

It's understandable, but inaccurate to compare *Bermuda Syndrome* to *Flashback*. The perspective is similar, as are the controls, but the thought process is very different. Think of each of the 250 locations as a set piece, with an individual problem to solve. It's all about getting from several A to Bs, without getting Thompson's head bitten off. Any shooting on Thompson's behalf is usually pretty strategic, and all his movements are required to be fairly precise. It's a thinking person's game for sure.

THE LAND THAT SCIENCE FICTION WON'T FORGET

Jack J Thompson is your man in this adventure, and he's just crash landed somewhere in the Bermuda Triangle. As Century Interactive see it, this is a tropical jungle where humans coexist with dinosaurs – a classic scenario for action if ever there was one! We are introduced to the game via a thrilling CG animation, portraying Thompson's last moments before plummeting to his fate. It's impressive, but the visuals don't get any less stunning thereafter. Models of dinosaurs are brought to life in vivid detail, albeit miniature, and their world is similarly intense. With each location looking as rich as the last, it's obvious where many of the man hours have been invested. Especially considering that we are promised over 250 similarly gorgeous sites of action.



▲ *Well, I guess they must've kocked it down!*

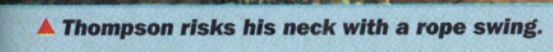


▲ *This girl become's Thompson's companion throughout the adventure.*









▲ *Thompson risks his neck with a rope swing.*

HIGH PROFILE SCORE

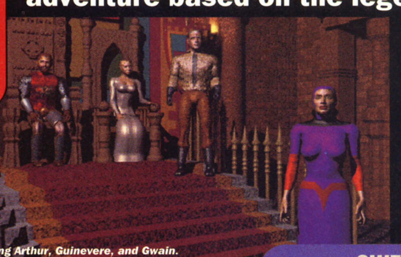
Century are so proud of their music in this game, that the package comes complete with an audio CD. The music is touted as being of outstanding cinematic quality, just like the rest of the game. High expectations, then for *Bermuda Syndrome*. Find out how many it fulfils next month.



CHRONICLES



Rincewind makes way for Merlin, and an epic adventure based on the legend of King Arthur.



▲ *King Arthur, Guinevere, and Gwain.*

With so many interpretations of the infamous legend of King Arthur, it's difficult to know in which one to suspend disblelief. So many books, some less fulfilling than others, and films – most of them stretching the fantasy too far in one direction, while neglecting worthwile details. At last it appears that the definitive insight into Pendragon lore is imminent. Though it's not provided in a book, or a film – it's here in the form of a computer game; from the same people who brought you *Discworld*: Sony Interactive Europe.

SWEAR BY THE SWORD

Though *Chronicles of the Sword* is published by SIE, it is the work of Wolverhampton-based developers Synthetic Dimensions. The team have applied untold amounts of research into the production of *Chronicles* – preparatory work which took a full year to complete. What they discovered is that there are few known facts, but plenty of mismatched half-truths. So the game sets out to detail a hitherto unheard part of the tale, leaving the supporting characters to be seen fulfilling their various roles. Basing the game on a best-known part of the legend could make the game too easy for some, while being deliberatley obscure may exclude everybody. So players adopt the role of Gwain, eldest son of King Lot of Orkney, as he arrives in Camelot to become embroiled in witch queen Morgana's plans. Gwain's task is to protect King Arthur, his Kingdom, and the land. Success is rewarded by being made a Knight of the Round Table.



Gameplay adopts the form of a 'point and click' adventure. There are over 100 locations, combining first and third-person perspective. All visuals are 3D rendered.









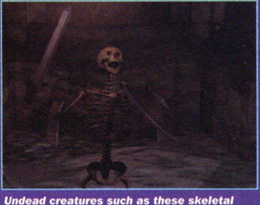
Merlin | Wilf | Lancelot | Arthur | Merlin | Morgana | Ragnar

OF THE SWORD



FOSSIL FINDING FACT FANS

It's a fact that legends of dragons are based largely on the discovey of dinosaur bones. So Synthetic Dimensions have incorporated this into *Chronicles*. Their dragon is in fact a Styracosaurus, a relative of Triceratops, whose skull most closely resembles that of a traditional dragon. And he isn't the only monster Gwain encounters on his travels:



Undead creatures such as these skeletal warriors are fought using a reasonably simple combat engine. Choose the direction you wish to move, then hit the button to attack! Other foes include a giant snake.

▲ *Paul's got some clothes just like this guy.*



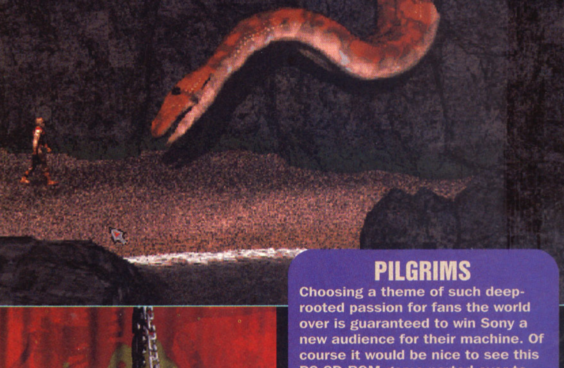
▲ *Paul always gets into work first too.*



▲ *Paul admires the scenery: "Burrilliant!", he exclaims in his best Grover voice.*







PILGRIMS

Choosing a theme of such deep-rooted passion for fans the world over is guaranteed to win Sony a new audience for their machine. Of course it would be nice to see this PC CD-ROM game ported over to Saturn at some stage too. However, for the time being at least, we can report that such a thing is not planned. Shame. Regardless, the review for those concerned appears next month.

CHEAT MODE

"Tip off tipface!" I said to the man in the shop, "do you think I do not know what I am talking about?", do you think I am such a idiot? "We at CVG have the best tips in the known tipping world" I announced. "So shu-up"
To prove myself I laid these very tips out in front of him.
"Strewth" he cried "they is brilliant, you are surely the chozen one of tippingdon". "But no", I replied "my name is Ed not Shirley and I am known as Kal-run-dor, High Emperor of Cheatairia, Lord of Hhhhemlar the secret tipping people of the East, and keeper of the sacred pulsating brain."
On that note I bid him farewell.
Send your tips to:
CHEAT MODE,
CVG MAGAZINE,
PRIORY COURT,
30-32 FARRINGDON LANE,
LONDON,
EC1R 3AU.
Many pressies await those published.
Avanti!

(Tom Cox'll never write again, promise.)

PLAYSTATION

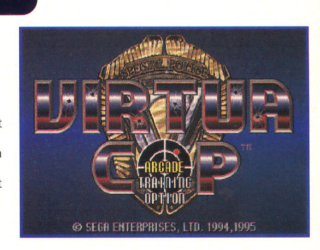
MORTAL KOMBAT 3

To get the cheat screen, turn the game on and leave it until the Rayden screen appears. Then press Triangle, Square, Circle, Cross, L1, L2. Then press Start to get to the select menu and press Up. Choose the "?" to get Free Play, Smoke, Fatality Time and Level Select options.

SATURN

VIRTUA COP

To get the extra options which usually only appear once the game has been completed, start the game up and leave it until the SEGA screen appears. When it does, hold C and press Up, Down, Left, Right. You'll now get the extra Ranking Mode, Free Play, Book Keep, Mirror Mode and extra lives options.









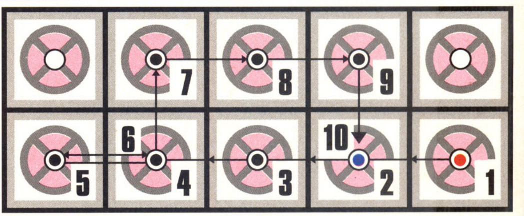
SATURN

X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

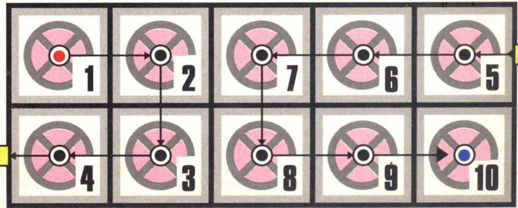
To play as Juggernaut, enter the cheat to play as Akuma by following the boxes on the right. Play a fight as Akuma and return to the character select screen. Your character picture will be blank. Now press the Up/Left diagonal twice to move through Wolverine and onto Juggernaut.



▲ Play a fight as Akuma and return to the character select screen to continue with the cheat.



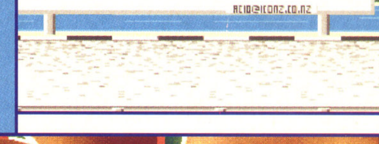
▲ For player one, move to the red dot and wait for 2 seconds, then move through to the blue dot in sequence and pause there for 2 seconds. Then press the three buttons on the left. For player 2, follow the sequence below, pausing on the red and blue dots as before. After playing as Akuma, follow the instructions to get to Juggernaut (Right).



MEGADRIVE

SUPER SKIDMARKS

To get a secret NITRO speed setting, go to the options screen and enter SPRINTER as a password. Go back to the main menu and select Match Race then Settings. Now change the speed and you'll get the extra NITRO setting. Thanks to John Wilton from Plymouth for sending us a rather more complicated version of that.





▲ ***Skidmarks not exciting enough for you? Try the special Nitro setting for extra speed and excitement.***





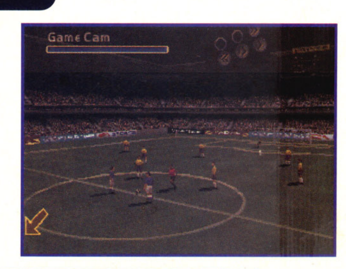




SATURN

FIFA '96

To change the length and angle of the players' shadows, pause a match and start an instant replay. Then hold the R button and press Up or Down to change the length and Left or Right to change the angle of the shadows.





PLAYSTATION

FIFA '96

To access the secret Extended Play options in the PlayStation version of FIFA, pause a match at any time to get to the option screen. Type in any of the following codes separately and exit by pressing CIRCLE. Then press SQUARE to access the secret cheat menu.

T - Triangle
S - Square
X - Cross
C - Circle

Super Power	T, S, T, T, T, T, T, T, T, T
Super Goalie	S, S, S, S, S, T, T, T, T, T
Super Defence	T, T, T, T, T, X, T
Super Offence	S, S, S, S, S, T, X
Curve Ball	T, S, X, T, X, X
Crazy Ball	X, S, T, X, X, T, S, X
Invisible Walls	X, X, X, T, S, S, S, T
Penalty Shoot-out	S, T, S, X, S, T
Stupid Team	S, T, X, S, T, X

It's also possible to change the time of day. Pause the match and go to the instant replay then hold R1. Now press Up or Down to change the time of day and the length of the shadows and press Left or Right to rotate the shadows around the players.

SATURN

SEGA RALLY

We can now reveal the secrets and cheats for Rally which we didn't tell you last month.

To make the LAKESIDE course selectable in the Time Attack, 2 player and Practice modes, either:



1. Get onto the Lakeside course by coming first on Mountain in Championship mode.



2. Go to the Mode Select screen and press X and Y simultaneously.

To get the LANCIA STRATOS secret car, you can use one of two methods to access it:



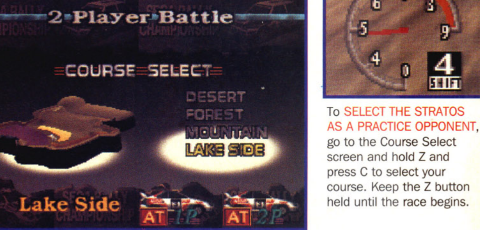
1. Finish the Lakeside course in first place at the end of Championship mode.



2. Go to the Mode Select screen and press X, Y, Z, Y, X. Once the car has been accessed you can select it by going to the Car Select screen and moving off to either the far left or right of the other cars.



To SELECT THE STRATOS AS A PRACTICE OPPONENT, go to the Course Select screen and hold Z and press C to select your course. Keep the Z button held until the race begins.



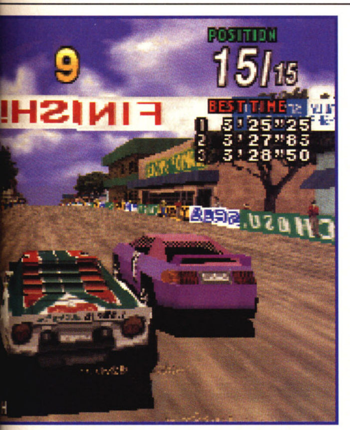
To get HYPER CAR mode which speeds all of the cars up and gives them better grip (ever so slightly), go to the Car Select screen, hold X and press C. A new set of records will appear for Hyper Cars.

ARCADE

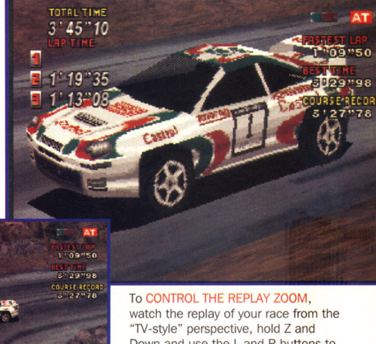
MARVEL SUPER HEROES

The first of the secret characters has been exposed! To play as DOCTOR DOOM, go to the character select screen and follow these instructions:
Highlight HULK and wait for two seconds, then move onto JUGGERNAUT, then SHUMA-GORATH, then SPIDERMAN and finally PSYLOCKE. Wait there for two seconds and press Start, Quick Punch and Fierce Punch at the same time to access Doom.





To get MIRROR MODE when playing in Arcade mode, hold Y and press C on Select Game screen.
To get Mirror Mode when playing in Time Attack or 2 Player mode, hold Y and press C on Course Select screen.



To CONTROL THE REPLAY ZOOM, watch the replay of your race from the "TV-style" perspective, hold Z and Down and use the L and R buttons to zoom in and out.

SEGA RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

We think you'll find the tone of this month's mailbag slightly lighter than usual. Or should that be light headed – seeing as you all seem to have gone completely off the wall. Look for an interesting analogy comparing games to toffees, and a worthless rant from a 'reader' who just don't speak very good England. Please have your dictionaries to hand when contacting these esteemed orrifices...er...offices, and remember to use a tissue then throw it away. It's more hygenic. Address everything you find in passing to:

IN THE BAG, CVG, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

in the

CAN I PLAY UK GAMES ON MY JAPANESE PLAYSTATION?

Dear CVG,
Why do the ads in your magazine advertise games for sale that are not even released yet: eg. Krazy Ivan in the back is advertised in the back of your magazine by a company called Gameplay. How can this be? Also, can I play games on my Japanese PlayStation and if not, is there an adaptor and how much is it? Finally, how come Saturn reviews are so much longer than PlayStation ones when the PlayStation kicks ass? Thanks a lot.
James Harris.

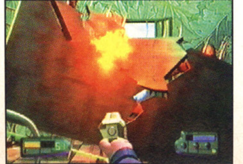
CVG: The answer to your first question is because these companies are trying to get your money whichever way they can. If this means paying for Ultra Pilotwings six months in advance, this is entirely your choice – though it can lead to problems. About playing official CDs on your Japanese PlayStation: yes you can, though it involves fooling your machine to think that the lid is closed, and putting the CD drive at risk. Not only that but recent PlayStations are apparently fixed so that this trick doesn't work at all. So yes, and no – and not altogether advised. As for our Saturn reviews being longer than PlayStation ones, it isn't something we've really noticed doing. We just give big games more coverage, and lately those games just happen to have been Saturn titles.

IS M2 A NEW MACHINE OR ADD-ON. TELL ME NOW, C-V-G!

Dear CVG,
After owning an Amiga for three years I have now decided to invest in a new console. I have been heavily considering a 3DO, especially now since the price has been slashed by £100. I have only recently found out about the M2 and I had read that it was an upgrade for the 3DO, yet your magazine seemed to be saying that the M2 was a completely new games machine. Please can you clear this up for me?
Garry Crowden, Wigan.

CVG: Sorry about the confusion Garry, but this M2 business really isn't so complicated. Matsushita are releasing the M2 as both a standalone system, and an upgrade for the existing 3DO – though we doubt there's going to be much of a price difference.





"CVG ACCEPTS BRIBES FOR GOOD SCORES" CLAIMS EX-CVG READER!

Dear CVG,
I am writing to you to ask how you justify your review scores. For example, let's talk about Daytona USA on the Saturn – how many dinners and rounds of golf were you bribed with to give it 94%, when any half decent game player who has been in the business for more than two weeks can see its flaws, and would not even contemplate a score over 85%, let alone 94%. I guess all your games are reviewed by sixteen-year-olds who have just graduated from an Atari 2600.
Point two: your scores are way too high. You seem to give out 90%+ most of the time which means that from reading your magazine I could not tell a good game from a bad one as they all were classics according to your staff. Mmmmm, this seems very strange to me and I consider this type of review to be dishonest to the consumer as it would seem you don't actually review the game but the five course meal you had last night with the publishers.
I will not buy CVG again, and will advise my friends of the realities of Software magazines and their reviews after seeing this obvious attempt at 'overselling' a game. A good game should get between 70-85%, a really, really, good game 85-100%.
Honest Ivan, Cambridge

CVG: Though the entire CVG team has changed since the review score that you mention was awarded, Mr X, we wouldn't like to use this as an excuse in answer to your misguided opinion of our magazine. And before moving on to address your problems, we think you'll find that the majority of games magazines rated Daytona USA just as highly. It's a great game, you should play it sometime to find out! The first issue we'd like to clear up for all our readers, as you claim to have counted yourself out of this group, is that we are not in the least vulnerable to pressure from games publishers. What we say about games is exactly what we feel is true. Think about it, we have no reason at all to show any kind of bias toward any company or games publisher. We pride ourselves on our combined experience in the field of computer and video games, and feel extremely annoyed by your inference that we accept bribes. So far as percentage ratings are concerned, we've found that most people will not consider buying a game these days unless it scores in the 90s. It's a crap situation to be in, we know, but it's a hole the UK games market has dug itself into – ask any retailer for their side of the story – and we have no choice but to recognise this. Even so, we think you'll find that CVG is the most stringent when it comes to review scores – if a game hits the 90s here, you know it's superb. Hopefully there are very few readers who believe what 'Honest Ivan' says to be the case.



bag

DA SATUN AIN'T GOT NUFFINK LIKE WOT DA PLAYSTAYSHUN HAVE, AND DATS DAT!

Dear CVG,
I recently walked down to the old newsagents, and again they didn't have a copy of your magazine. then my brother walked in and forced me to buy another magazine. When I got home I saw a review about VF2 (what was crap) in this mag, and SHOCK it said – can you believe – that Virtua Fighter 2 was ready to fart in the face of Tekken, and after that they bragged on about the Saturn being far better than the PlayStation. Shut up! I said, and threw the magazine on the floor.
Now Tekken is far better than VF2. But if you compared Tekken 2 to Virtua Fighter 2, I wonder who would win the best beat 'em up ever: Tekken 2, goddamn it! And about the Next Gen machines, I'll just show off the PlayStation against what the Saturn hasn't got.
1. I've heard continuously that the Saturn can't handle as much polygons moving at once while the PlayStation can easily handle 50 frames per second, and you know which game that is.
2. PlayStation overshadows Saturn in games. I'll just comment about there being more beat 'em ups for the PlayStation, like TohShinDen. TohShinDen 2 on its way. Tekken 1, Tekken 2, MK3, Criticom, Killer Instinct, another sequel on the way. Saturn has a lousy two beat 'em ups ups: Virtua Fighter, and Virtua Fighter 2. Which Next Gen system do you think is better by far? THE PLAYSTATION!
Michael Landon, Kent.

CVG: *One thing Michael, if you bought your games system just to play the best beat 'em ups, you may have bought the wrong one. Virtua Fighter 2 is proven better than Tekken 2 – it's the only game you'll see being played in Japanese arcades STILL. And it looks like the only one to supersede it will be Fighting Vipers – another Sega game. We're getting worried that CVG is sounding biased in all of this PlayStation versus Saturn hokum, but if you're going to choose beat 'em ups as a basis for an argument there really is only one answer. And Killer Instinct on PS? Nope.*



HEY GRANDPA, TELL US ABOUT HOW YOU USED TO PLAY HOOP AND STICK... AGAIN.

Dear CVG,
I am 30 years old, and I remember when games could be played. They were simple, addictive and could compare scores with others. I've often wondered when the games giants would release these arcade classics for us older, more discerning games players. Games such as Defender, Galaxian, Asteroids, Space Invader, Millipede, Missile Command, Tempest etc…
I recently discovered that Nintendo have brought out some of these classics on Game Boy. However, playing in miniature and black & white could be rather like eating a toffee with the wrapper on. Please write and tell me if and when other consoles will have these games available on them, and I will consider buying a console.
Darren Bagely, Huddersfield

CVG: *Erm... what's your point? For a moment we thought you were going to talk about how games haven't really developed much over the years. Become tame, and lost their edge or something. Then you just blow it all on some lame threat, along the lines of 'no classics, no console'. Well maybe there's already Pac-Man on PlayStation, among others. Plus there's Tempest and Defender on Jaguar. Maybe even Nintendo have Ultra Space Invaders planned. That might be cool. Then again, no it won't. And what's with this toffee wrapper analogy, Darren? Dear, oh dear.*

"CVG IS BUS-LOADS OF FUN!" CLAIMS SATISFIED READER.

Dear CVG,
Yours is the first computer and video game magazine that I have purchased and I have to say that I was very impressed. I picked it up in the Kingdom of Swaziland for the bus ride from Mbabane to Piggs Peak. I'm sure you'll be happy to know that the whole bus enjoyed your magazine as we were packed in there like cattle, and with this crazy heat any escape from reality is a welcome treat.
Although it ended costing around £5.00 over here, it was well worth the money and now that I've finished it, I'm starting it again (of course this has nothing to do with the fact that as I write this letter, I'm stuck in the middle of nowhere – no electricity, no running water – with nothing to do…)
Anyways, I'll make sure I pack my copy of CVG as I continue my travels around this globe of ours, not only for the great reading, but the quality paper it's printed on will make handy toilet paper!
Tom Budd, Calgary

CVG: *Well thank you very much. Thank you. And thanks again. Point taken about the paper quality. We're trying to work that one out, so to speak.*

POOR PROFESSOR COOPER. WE HEAR HIS SON'S A POOPER!



Dear CVG,
While playing The Ultimate Doom on the PC I have found something very odd. When you kill an enemy, it's legs are facing you. When you run over the dead body and turn round, its legs are STILL facing you! Weird, huh?
Matthew Cooper, London. (Son of Professor James Cooper).

CVG: *One grammatical error, Matthew, and the most anorak observation we've ever had to digest make you an embarrassment to your father. Don't show him this magazine, he'll disown you.*



This is the page where we could lie a lot, just to make you buy the mag. Or we could lie to make you not buy the mag. Or we could tell the truth, and you would buy the mag, and we would all have a clear conscience. Unless you didn't, and then we'd all feel really miserable. Decisions, eh!

NEXT MONTH

ATEI SHOW

Loads of big new arcade games are set to be revealed at at London's ATEI show and we'll have a big feature on them all. We've already been briefly and we're tipping Namco's *Tokyo War* as a biggun!

DARK STALKERS

We promised you them a few issues back but this it's for real! Capcom's PlayStation and Saturn conversions are to be found in the next issue of CVG!

SATURN SONY GAMES

Hopefully, we'll have features on the new Saturn versions of some of the PlayStation's hottest games – including *WipEout* and *Destruction Derby* – as everyone gears themselves up for the official announcement of their release!

ACTUA GOLF

It may well be the only style of game that your Dad will play, but Gremlin's amazing-looking 3D golf game could be the one that converts us all to the dark side of sport!

ULTIMATE MORTAL KOMBAT 3

Okay, so it's been featured in the last three issues in a row, but that's because we (well, Ed) love it. Next month we'll have the 3DO and (hopefully) Saturn versions, as well as a competition to win yourself a 3DO as well as copies of the game!

RESIDENT EVIL

This is undoubtedly going to be one of the hottest games of 1996 and next month we'll be going over the completed game with you. Blast zombies' stinking puss-filled heads off with shotguns! Splat mutant spiders up the walls! Destroy all (and solve puzzles) in Capcom's incredible 3D world!

FUTURE SHOCK

Virgin's amazing 3D shoot 'em up set in the world of the Terminators sure does look good and next month you'll be able to read our opinions in the CVG review of the game. It's been said before, but maybe this time it really is the end for Doom!

AND

And what...? Oh yes – and a no-holds-barred review of the sure-to-be-a-hit *Street Fighter Alpha*. Plus there's *X-Men* on PC and PlayStation. *Alien Trilogy*. Not forgetting – how could we forget – more Ultra 64, and M2 updates. And loads more, ALRIGHT! We're working hard to make it the best issue EVER!



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